MAN AND HIS BUILDINGS

By T. S. Attlee

LIBRARY
UNIVERSITY OF
CALIFORNIA
SAN DIEGO

75296

Digitized by the Internet Archive
in 2007 with funding from
Microsoft Corporation

http://www.archive.org/details/manhisbuildings00attliala

MAN AND HIS BUILDINGS

#75296

THE CHRISTIAN REVOLUTION SERIES
VOLUME X

MAN AND HIS BUILDINGS

BY
T. S. ATTLEE, M.A., A.R.I.B.A.

THE SWARTHMORE PRESS LTD.
72 OXFORD STREET, LONDON, W.1

NOTE

THIS book is largely an expansion of an essay on *The Influence on Architecture of the Condition of the Worker*, which gained the Silver Medal of the Royal Institute of British Architects in 1914. That essay in its turn was largely inspired by Ruskin's great chapter in *The Stones of Venice* on "The Nature of Gothic," and is an attempt to apply the principles enunciated there more widely. The subject has been treated most illuminatingly by Morris, Choisy, Viollet-le-Duc, Lethaby and others. If this book sends its readers to theirs much of its purpose will be accomplished. The writer abhors dogmatism and distrusts wide generalizations: this book—because it is small and its subject huge—is full of both. But possibly to lengthen it by introducing copious footnotes, saving clauses and qualifications would be to bring in a remedy worse than the disease.

CONTENTS

CHAPTER		PAGE
I.	INTRODUCTION	13
II.	EGYPT AND GREECE: DARKNESS AND DAYLIGHT .	27
III.	ROME AND BYZANTIUM: FROST AND THAW .	53
IV.	GOTHIC I: ADVENTURE	71
V.	GOTHIC II: EXULTATION	97
VI.	CLASSIC REVIVAL: PLAYTIME AND PEDANTRY .	115
VII.	TO-DAY: CHAOS	133
VIII.	THE FUTURE: REVOLUTION . . .	159
	BIBLIOGRAPHY.	177

ILLUSTRATIONS

	FACING PAGE
TEMPLE AT KARNAK	27
TEMPLE OF THESEUS, ATHENS	27
COLISEUM AT ROME	53
ST. SOPHIA, CONSTANTINOPLE	53
BEAUVAIS: THE CATHEDRAL	97
CHAMBOID: THE CHÂTEAU	97
HATFIELD HOUSE	115
KING'S CROSS STATION	115

INTRODUCTION

Architecture is the matrix of civilization.

W. R. Lethaby.

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

HISTORY is valuable in so far as it enlarges and deepens our knowledge of the spirit of man. Countless numbers of men in the past have made their contributions towards the great enterprise of mankind, the quest of the knowledge of God. In studying History, these efforts of man's spirit are laid open to the sympathetic enquirer, and we are enabled to fortify and direct our efforts by theirs.

Man has expressed himself, his aims, faith and speculations, and the everyday life in which he sought to realize those aims, through various works, the most important of which to us to-day are Books and Buildings. Broadly speaking, the former is the method of man in isolation, and is the principal method which he employs to-day; the latter is the product of men in association, and was his principal means of expression in the past. It may seem paradoxical to speak of literature as the product of man in isolation, when it is clear that the printing of the written word, the

paper on which the word is printed, and the distribution of it when it is printed, are only made possible by the most highly organized endeavours of men in most close association. Though this is true, however, and though the output of the man himself is not really his own, but that of the community articulate through him, yet the work that results must be judged as the work of that individual, the product of his brain and no one else's, whatever materials he may have drawn upon for its composition.

Building, however, is essentially co-operative. The ineradicable tendency of men in general to ignore the architect and hold the building to be the product of the town or society is not without justification. Great building is not the realization of the design of an individual, but the product of a crowd of workers, conscious of a common aim and co-operating for its achievement.

In this book we are to examine how, in any age, man's efforts to embody himself—his personality—in the works of his hands, have been conditioned strictly by the character of the civilization he has evolved. We want to find out what it was that in some ages enabled men to attain to such sympathy with each other and the world around them, that

they were able to perceive and draw out and fix in permanence a store of the beauty that lies waiting for discovery in everything about us, while in other ages the light flickered and men's perception was dimmed and their power of expression atrophied.

We shall confine ourselves to the art of building, as that art (necessarily since it is not only an art but a utility) reflects most sensitively the changing character and habits of successive generations.

In trying to determine what are the essentials of great building, we shall get some idea of the ideal community, which can alone produce it, some idea of the conditions under which man can so express himself, some idea of the faith which must create such a community and inspire the organization of its workers.

Architecture is man's story in stone. He has employed other means for telling that story, but none so intelligible, so permanent, so pitilessly accurate as his buildings. In his dwellings his habits, his daily routine, his common domestic difficulties and expedients lie revealed: in his public buildings his communal organization; in his churches his faith and fear. By the size of the stones he uses we learn his mechanical efficiency or ignorance; in his decoration he reveals his travels, his

toil, his appreciation, above all, of his world—what struck him and what did not.

Towns especially are living witnesses to the story of the past, irrepressible proclaimers of the character of the present. They are groups of garrulous buildings, great and small, that shout, whisper, even to the sympathetic ear, complain.

To-day man turns his eyes not on buildings, but books. This is the age of writing ; we are all, so to speak, experts at it. We can not only read, but write ourselves ; we can appreciate every remotest implication of a word—the fragrant associations of some, the ridicule that clings to others ; the irridescence of the fresh-caught phrase ; the words that come trailing clouds of glory, the words that are exiled from decent society. G. K. Chesterton is the characteristic product of the age, and he takes word after word up—many-sided, ambiguous—and turns now one facet to the light, now another, upsets a heresy or creates a theory with every turn, and his audience doesn't miss a single flash.

But in the Middle Ages (for instance) exactly the opposite was the case. Men couldn't read books, but they could read buildings. Buildings were their Bibles (as Ruskin has shown in the *Bible of Amiens*). The wealth

of imagery on their cathedrals brought their religion near to them and made it real. The saints there in stone were men like themselves, and if St. James had come down from his pedestal and walked the streets, he would have been hail fellow well met with the first comer. The common labours of every day were shown there, accurate, recognizable, and the lesson that was taught was not to be escaped.

To emphasize the contrast between then and now, it is only necessary to imagine the consternation if a saint were to step down into the street from a modern stained-glass window, with beard of abnormal curliness, feet of astounding flatness, and swathed apparently in towels almost prohibitive of progress: or imagine the figures of a frieze representing the Progress of Industry coming down and offering their services in the shop or factory. We have ceased to express ourselves through stone and glass and wood to-day, and it is because we have so ceased, that it is exceedingly difficult to read the message that earlier ages wrote so earnestly in and on their buildings.

Much of it we cannot hope to read at all: we have lost the clue, and it is as meaningless to us as the sporting columns of a newspaper will be to future generations who cannot recover the experience, or share the mental

equipment that makes its elaborately allusive dialect intelligible. But there are needs, emotions, sufferings, joys that are the common property of all ages, that have to be met and dealt with and discussed by all peoples everywhere—death, birth, the struggle for food, the dangers of travel, "all the changes and chances of this mortal life," and we can read what they thought of these, and sympathize and learn.

Great art in whatever form is not the property of the student or the connoisseur, but makes a universal appeal. In the *Oxford Book of English Verse*, the glad Thirteenth Century "Cuckoo Song" with which it opens and the solemn "Dominus Illuminatio Mea" with which it closes, touch the heart equally for all the six centuries that lie between them.

Now it may be maintained that this matter of old buildings is of concern to the archæologist, but of little importance to men in general to-day—men who are at grips with the problems of the present and have little sympathy with what must be a purely academic interest in the past.

What does it matter if men do not express themselves through brick and stone to-day, but through books instead? So long as

they do express themselves, does it matter how?

It does matter, because while we can put away books, hide them, at any rate refrain from reading unless we like, we cannot get away from buildings. They stand there about our path and about our bed and they will poison or sweeten all our ways.

In studying History we are constantly astonished at the "blind spots" in our fathers' vision—the things they inexplicably failed to see. One of our blindest spots is that which prevents us from seeing how strongly we are affected by the beauty or ugliness of our surroundings. The meanness of mean streets, the cheapness of villa residences, the ostentation of great offices may arouse a variety of emotions, but they do not awaken joy. The sham Gothic of churches, the careful copying of forms no longer articulate may teach something, but they do not teach sincerity.

Now joy and sincerity are the most conspicuous among our losses to-day. Our intense appreciation of the child—greater I suppose now than ever before—is due at least in part to our realization that children have what we have not—those very qualities—and that they will lose them so soon, whatever we may do to prevent it.

To put this matter of the influence of environment to the test, it is only necessary to be ill, and note how every separate bit of ugliness in the room takes advantage of the illness to insist upon recognition and reiterates its insistence. Few can remain cheerful or even equable in a railway waiting-room—the most repellant of all conceivable interiors. But the most obviously influential of all man's surroundings to-day are the advertisements, carefully calculated to bite their mute message into his brain, till do what he will he cannot escape from their unremitting insistence, and he obeys their mandate almost unresisting.

To-day our lives are guided, moulded, permeated by the advertisement—on walls, in newspapers, in the fields. All manner of common objects are captured and exploited for its purposes. Once a man "saw in every hedgerow marks of angels' feet," now blackbirds in the snow irresistibly proclaim a famous whisky; a brown and white cow suggests not its own milk, but Nestlé's, and cherry-blossom is a boot polish or a tooth paste. This matter will need more detailed treatment in a later chapter, here it is only necessary to emphasize the fact that in the past this permeation and guidance was exercised principally through buildings and that its basis was not money-

making but religion, not the quest of gold but the quest of God.

Because this was so, their works were beautiful and ours are not. What Beauty is, we cannot attempt to describe, but there are three pregnant sayings which interlock with each other and perhaps suggest the kernel of the matter: Keats' "Beauty is truth, truth beauty," Renan's "Man makes Beauty of that which he loves," [1] St. John's "God is Love."

One may fancy that the realization of Beauty is a flash of perception, a sudden catching of the right angle of vision, an effort of sympathetic discernment that shows men and things as they really are, undisturbed by one's own disturbing prejudices and restless self-justification. One may fancy that its creation ensues from losing oneself in concentration on the task before one, finding oneself in harmony with one's surroundings and their Creator, gaining a certainty of discovery—this is the way and this only.

"Beauty seems to be to art as happiness to conduct," writes Lethaby. It is not the object of attainment, but the mark of it. It is the tiniest spark of a beginning of the knowledge of God. The glory of the discoverer of it is

[1] Quoted by Lethaby in *Architecture*.

that he lets his fellows into a little bit more of the secret :—

> God uses us to help each other so,
> Lending our minds out.[1]

What then are the essential conditions of the attainment of Beauty ? To pretend to be able to do more than shoot somewhere in the right direction, chance on some possible suggestion, would be intolerable. The purpose of this book is to show that a study of the Building Art would seem to indicate that two indispensable ingredients are Freedom and Association.

A man must be free in order to be sincere, to become a "Candidate for Truth." He must be able to experiment, to follow without fear wherever his quest for Truth, which is Beauty, leads him. He must work in association with his fellows and for them, so that in ceasing to be absorbed in his own single note, he may catch theirs, and with theirs the whole chord ; or, to vary the simile, in ceasing to fix his gaze on his own patch from his own candle, he may see what is illuminated by theirs and so discern an intelligible whole, not a meaningless fragment. Freedom without association is impossible. It is only in pro-

[1] Browning : *Fra Lippo Lippi.*

portion as a man loses himself in the service of others, that his own individuality emerges; he must lose his life in order to find it. But Service is not Servitude. It is only so far as men hold a common faith, are in sympathy with each other, can identify each man himself with his fellows, that they can achieve the one without the other.

In this book an attempt will be made to show that it is only in following the life and teaching of Jesus Christ and accepting in thoroughness and sincerity His valuation of personality—the infinite worth and dignity of every individual—that it is possible to attain to that freedom which is founded on Love and attains to Truth. For " God is the Author of Peace and Lover of Concord, in knowledge of Whom standeth our eternal life, Whose service is perfect freedom."

EGYPT AND GREECE: DARKNESS AND DAYLIGHT

And sullen Moloch fled,
Hath left in shadows dred,
His burning Idol all of blackest hue,
In vain with cymbals ring,
They call the grisly King,
In dismall dance about the furnace blue ;
The brutish Gods of Nile as fast,
Isis and Orus and the Dog Anubis hast.

Nor is Osiris seen
In Memphian Grove, or Green,
Trampling the unshowr'd grasse with lowings loud :
Nor can he be at rest
Within his sacred chest,
Naught but profoundest Hell can be his shroud,
In vain with Timbrel'd Anthems dark
The sable-stolèd Sorcerers bear his worshipt Ark.

JOHN MILTON,
Hymn on the Morning of Christ's Nativity.

We are lovers of beauty without extravagance, and lovers of wisdom without unmanliness. Wealth to us is not mere material for vainglory but an opportunity for achievement ; and poverty we think it no disgrace to acknowledge but a real degradation to make no effort to overcome.

PERICLES,
The Funeral Speech (Thucydides, tr. Zimmern).

TEMPLE AT KARNAK.

Photo Bonfils.

TEMPLE OF THESEUS, ATHENS.

CHAPTER II

EGYPT AND GREECE: DARKNESS AND DAYLIGHT

In beginning the detailed discussion of man's buildings and their significance in different ages, emphasis should be laid upon the fact that no treatise on such a subject can be exhaustive; that a book as short as this is must be full of generalizations that are sweeping (and therefore inaccurate) and omissions that are unjustifiable, that it will contain many statements that are dogmatic and unsubstantiated—in short, that it must at every point invite controversy. This defect is almost inevitable in treating so huge a subject in a tiny book. It is only referred to here in order to insist that its dogmatism results from an attempt at brevity and clearness and is not due to failure on the author's part to appreciate the inadequacy of his knowledge, or to overconfidence in his own judgment.

We may begin by examining first the country of Egypt and its monuments, and then, ignoring all other styles, follow the progress of Archi-

tecture in Europe through the Greek, Roman, Byzantine and Renaissance manners down to those of the present day. In doing so, we shall endeavour to look at the subject from two points of view. We shall ask of the buildings, "What sort of people built you? You have such and such features—why?" On the other hand, we shall consider what we know of the peoples concerned, and we shall ask ourselves, "What sort of buildings would such a people as that produce? Do the monuments express the character of the people? If they do not do so, why is it?"

"Architecture is the matrix of civilization," wrote Professor Lethaby. There is our theme in a nutshell.

In Egypt we consider a people whose records go back to 3000 B.C. and who have left a store of monuments to witness to their life in all ages. The task of reviewing a period from 2830 B.C. (Fourth Dynasty—earliest known monuments) to 30 B.C. (date of Egypt's becoming a Roman province) seems staggering, but actually it is not so formidable. Egyptian history is not complex, the people and their customs have remained extraordinarily unchanging from the earliest times down to the present day, the monuments fall into simple groups and are themselves simple in character.

To take first the Pyramids (those at Gizeh

date from the Fourth Dynasty). Their characteristics are, first, prodigious size and solidity, secondly, extreme simplicity—the Pyramid is simply a mountain of stone with a tomb concealed in it.

Now the dominant motive of the kings who raised them was securing a tomb that should be absolutely permanent. The Egyptians held that man was composed of body, soul and the Ka, an independent spiritual being. They believed that the body must be preserved for re-use by the Ka after death. They did all they could to effect this by embalming the body and enclosing it in an impregnable tomb. From the humblest individual with his shallow trough and rough brick heap over it to the king with his Pyramid at Gizeh, the intention was the same—the permanent preservation of the body.

The purpose of the building, then, was the outcome of the religious belief of the builder. What dictated its shape?

To determine this it is necessary to examine the building resources in labour and materials that were available. We may dismiss, I think, any idea that the shape was chosen for æsthetic reasons. In proportion to the amount of material employed, the pyramid is the least impressive of building forms. It does not look its size.

It is difficult to imagine that any one with a free choice would have selected it, but a free choice is just what the Pharaohs had not. In the first place, Egypt is very badly supplied with timber. Limited stocks of acacia, tamarisk, sycamore and palm are all that are available, and the last two—the former for its lack of elasticity, the latter for its lack of stiffness—are of small value. Elaborate scaffolding thus was out of the question. Moreover, the Egyptian had progressed only a very little way in devising machinery for hoisting and transporting stone. Choisy [1] finds no trace on the Egyptian buildings of either holes for the lewis bolts or marks of slings, as there must have been if they had known of the pulley or derrick.

It was necessary therefore to choose a form of building that would need neither scaffolding nor derricks. The pyramid met the case exactly. Choisy has shown how, by simple application of the lever and wedge, and by rockers, stone could be easily raised from step to step of the Pyramid—for it was built in the form of a square diminishing by steps to a point.

Again, this form met satisfactorily the labour conditions of the time. The kings had not highly skilled mechanics or great artists, but they had an enormous supply of unskilled

[1] *L'Art de Bâtir chez les Egyptiens.*

docile labour—so great a supply that they need not care how many they "used up" in the process of quarrying, transporting and building the stone. There is no intricacy of plan, no complexity of construction in the Pyramid, and no experiments to venture upon, demanding a cunning and daring workman. It is exactly the sort of structure that would be raised by a man who had great power but little imagination, great resources but little ingenuity. All through the ages we shall see that wealth and power, by a sure instinct, seek size in their buildings—they can achieve that when they can achieve nothing else. "The populace of that date," writes Erman,[1] "looked back to the Pyramid age as to a time when the lower orders were greatly oppressed by forced labour." Again, "No Egyptologist now doubts that all these marvels were worked by one power alone, viz. by the reckless expenditure of human labour. Great things can be accomplished with the most primitive means by those who have no compunction in working hundreds and thousands of workmen to exhaustion, unconcerned as to how many fall by fatigue." Just so, Erman comments, in digging the Mahmudieh canal in modern times, 250,000 peasants were employed for a year and 20,000 sacrificed to the undertaking.

[1] *Life in Ancient Egypt.*

To turn next to the temples. Their dominant purpose is mystery. Approaching along a paved road with sphinxes on each side, and through massive pylons, the worshipper found himself first in a great colonnaded court: thence he passed into a huge gloomy hall lighted by small windows close under the roof, which was carried on massive pillars. Beyond this hall again were three entirely dark chapels, and in the centre chapel was the actual dwelling of the mysterious god. The worshipper's progress all the way would be from light to darkness, from reality to illusion. At Karnak the medley of buildings, the succession of halls with their forest of pillars, emphasize this character of incomprehensibility even more strongly. This temple with its confusion, its incoherence, its bewildering absence of any visible unity, is a fitting embodiment of the Egyptian religion with its crowd of gods, identified now with one figure, now with another, clothed with contradictory attributes and concealing under a cloak of mystery a childish chaos of puppets, set up as bogeys in the darkness.

The confusion at Karnak, it must be noted, was not the original design, but is the result of successive Pharaohs placing additional temples across and in front of the original building,

without reference to the effect their contribution would have on the design as a whole.

With the growing size of this and other temples we see visibly embodied the steady growth in the power of the priests. The Old Empire (2830-2530) was a bureaucracy—greater officials, lesser officials, serfs. The New Empire (1530-1050) was first a military state (the bureaucrats are soldiers), then—with the Eighteenth Dynasty—the possession of the priests, who fill all the principal offices and dominate the throne.

That the priests did their work well is attested by the remarkable influence exercised by the Egyptian religion alike on Greeks and Romans and even into modern times. Spells, incantations, amulets, magical formulæ that must be spoken over the dead, names of power that must not be spoken—these abound in the religion of Egypt, and these have always appealed to the imagination of mankind.[1]

[1] . . . . . he regards thee, as our lord
Who lived there in the pyramid alone,
Looked at us (dost thou mind) when, being young,
We both would unadvisedly recite
Some charm's beginning from that book of his,
Able to bid the sun throb wide and burst
All into stars, as suns grown old are wont.

BROWNING, *An Epistle.*

The architectural forms employed in the temples are the mass, the column, lintel and slab—that is to say, the simple combinations of blocks that occur to the mind of a child making his first essays in building with bricks in the nursery. Apart from the difficulties of cutting and transporting heavy masses of hard stone, there are no serious constructional problems involved. It is true that we find first in Egypt the element of Thrust—the arrangement of materials in such a way as to press outwards as well as downwards (as in the arch)—but the thrust is snowed under, so to speak, in the mass of inert material, and did not present itself as the living, active, struggling element that the Gothic builders found it.

The columns are of two main types—plain cylinders and cylinders grooved to represent grouped columns. Both types were inspired by the stalks of the Nile water-plants. The former loses some of its apparent stability (in our Western eyes at any rate) by being often rounded in at the base as a reed is. The latter simulates a bundle of reeds bound together near the top.

The columns are massive, close-set, satisfying from their obvious adequacy to perform their task—the carrying the lintel. They terminate in capitals, again of two types—the

bud and the flower, these too modelled on the water-plant. They are graceful in outline, but not altogether satisfying. The bud capital is smaller at its top than at its bottom. Now a column can carry a greater load than can conveniently be placed on its top: one feels therefore that a capital should expand upwards so as to afford a platform for this, its proper load. The bud capital is to that extent inappropriate. The flower capital is more satisfactory. Here criticism would select the thin edge of its petals as appearing inadequate to bear the heavy load imposed upon it—but this defect it shares with many capitals of later date, and it is not of very great weight, since one knows that there is solidity enough behind it after all, and the actual bearing of the superimposed load need not extend to the edges.

The general impression that is conveyed by this architecture is solidity and size. There is no daring, no experiment—simple forms are employed, masses of material are piled up; the spectator is astonished not so much at the result as at the labour that that result must have entailed. The technical skill shown in dressing the blocks is great, considering the extreme rudeness of the tool employed—a little wooden chisel with a wooden mallet—but the fine surface is obtained simply by the exercise

of inexhaustible patience. The work was desperately monotonous, wearyingly slow, but the supply of labour was enormous.

Just in the same way one is astonished at the power that could transport colossal masses of stone from the quarries to the building, but there were thousands of hands that could be set to haul the ropes. So too the quarrying the great granite blocks—by the slowest and most primitive means—was to our idea an almost intolerably laborious task, but again there was the great reservoir of labour, docile, inexpensive. The stamp of the slave is over all the work.

We have detailed evidence of the organization of the people under the New Empire : the companies of artisans allotted to the great departments, their extreme poverty and servility ; their constant complaints of pay deferred and rations withheld ; the corruption of high officials ; the servility of lower. That there was an intermediate class between officials and serfs is certain, but it was small and has left little record of itself. The Servile State was at its highest development in Egypt of the past, and Egypt of to-day illustrates fully what that meant.

Of towns and the houses of the people we can say little. The Egyptians built their houses

of unbaked bricks made of Nile mud, with wooden supports for the wooden roof. They have disappeared altogether, both the houses of the rich and the mud hovels of the poor. We have, however, records of what the houses of the well-to-do were like in pictures, in tombs and in coffins, which are sometimes shaped like little model houses.

The typical plan consists of a great vestibule with an antechamber for the porter, behind that a large dining-hall, a small court beyond with the master's bedroom on the right, kitchen and store-room on the left, and the women's house and garden beyond.[1] The houses are often brilliantly decorated, and seem to have been admirably planned to make the best use of the climatic conditions. Paintings show full details of the uses to which the different rooms were put. Rugs decorated the floor, carpets hung on the walls, the tall wooden columns were graceful, the courtyards secluded. Altogether both the great houses and the small (the latter just a court with rooms at the back and a roof over them) strike one as convenient and charming. The poor dwelt in mud huts only. It is regrettable that actual houses have not survived—they would serve to correct the impression of weight and weariness that is

[1] Erman: *Life in Ancient Egypt.*

given by the monuments—even a bureaucrat "expands into fireside humanity" at home, and there is another side even to the Servile State.

The towns, however, are just mounds to-day, and we are thrown back on to tombs and temples for visible record of Egypt of the past.

To summarize what has been said. In Egypt the individual finds no expression in the architecture: the builders are hands—nothing more. The buildings are tyranny made visible, and, as tyranny is bound to be, are stupid. Apart from some ingenious expedients for avoiding fracture in setting stones and for preventing them from sliding on their beds, there is very little ingenuity or inventiveness shown. The building great flights of steps in order to get the stones for the pylons up into place and the heaping up a huge mound of earth as centering for the roofs of the great halls of temples, are incredibly slow and laborious expedients. There is little progress, little change even in the three thousand years of Egyptian history. It is dead architecture. We shall see later what is meant by living architecture.

To what causes may we attribute the character which civilization assumed in Egypt? It is generally agreed that the Nile is the first and most potent influence. It is the only

highway; it is the source of all its fertility. The people have their eyes riveted on it all through life. Irrigation is the key to Egyptian history. "The hard logic of facts teaches us that an autocratic government is always necessary to control and regulate irrigation." [1] This is the core of the matter.

Canals, dykes, sluices can only be carried out through the labour of great masses of men; the irrigation of his own little patch demands the peasant's continual and unwearying attention. The Egyptian labourer has always been listless and overworked. The landscape of the monstrous valley, shut in by hills, filled with fields and fields traversed by thousands of watercourses, tends to make him dull and uninventive. There is scarcely access to the sea from the spreading delta at the end of the long narrow land. There are deserts at the side. The physical features of Egypt do not make for initiative, imagination, adventure.

Finally, and resulting from these two causes, we have the Egyptian religion—essentially superstitious, designed by officials for a people that is ignorant, and designed to keep them so.

We start our enquiry then with a study of ignorance and tyranny, and their fruits in size and stupidity.

[1] Erman: *Life in Ancient Egypt.*

Greek Architecture.

On leaving Egyptian architecture for Greek, we are met by an apparent similarity and a real contradiction.

In the temples there are the same constructional forms—the column and lintel—employed in much the same way: here are columns with the flower capitals of Egypt: here are great stones wrought to a fine surface, laid with precision; here again is repetition of features, iteration of ornament. But here, too, is an astonishing difference. We are in a changed world and before a new level of attainment altogether. Wherein does this difference consist? Let us very briefly sketch the condition of Athens at its greatest period and, considering then what sort of buildings such a people would erect, see how the Greek temples embody the characteristics of Greek civilization.

In Athens we have a small body of citizens (40,000), intensely conscious of their privileges and responsibilities as citizens, intellectually alert, politically expert, above all penetrated through and through with a sense of the unique achievements of the city to which they belonged, and the value of the contribution which each as an individual could make to it.

This involved a conception of freedom which

never appeared for an instant on the mental horizon of the Egyptian ; it involved a political efficiency which we to-day are only beginning to envisage as practical politics. " In the golden age of Athens," writes Warde Fowler,[1] " the interests of the State and Individual were more perfectly identified than in any other state of antiquity."

We pass then at a bound from Egyptian darkness to the daylight of Greece.

To the citizen of Athens the problem to be solved in his lifetime was not the getting the means of life, but living itself—the right employment of leisure ; not the amassing of riches or the assertion of power, but living the good life, finding it out by thought and living it out in action. He aimed at efficiency in the widest sense of the word, and he was not content until he had made it definite and made it realizable. This ideal was not realized without considerable modifications. There were in Athens in B.C. 431, besides the 40,000 citizens and 24,000 outlanders, 55,000 slaves. How did they fit in with the theory on which the city's life was based ?

" Judged by the standard of the nineteenth century," says Warde Fowler,[1] " Athens was not a democracy but a slaveholding aristocracy

[1] *The City State of the Greeks and Romans.*

. . . and this means that all their menial work, and no doubt a great part of the work which is now done by what we call the industrial classes, was done for the Athenians by persons who were in no sense members of the state, who had neither will nor status of their own, whose one duty in life was to obey the orders of their masters. The citizen of Athens had leisure to attend to his public duties, to educate himself for them, to enjoy himself at festivals and the theatre, chiefly because he had in his home and in his workshop a sufficient number of slaves to carry on his affairs in his absence. It need hardly be said that from all such education, public business and enjoyment the slave was most carefully excluded."

On the other hand: "The material resources of Athens were not built up, as is so often said, on a basis of slave labour. . . . Greek democracy, we have often been told, was rendered possible by the leisure of a population of slave-owners . . . all this is false." [1]

Here is apparently a flat contradiction, but it is to some extent only apparent, not real. The matter hinges on the definition you give of the word "slave." That there were 55,000 slaves is admitted, but Zimmern contends that it is the nature of the work on which a man is

[1] Zimmern: *The Greek Commonwealth.*

engaged and the character of the motive that keeps him at it that really decides whether he is actually a slave or not.

The slave on a coffee-plantation, drudging mechanically at a monotonous task, held to his work solely by his desire to avoid the stroke of the overseer's whip, is a slave indeed. The slave in Athens, working on tasks that called for the exercise of his best powers, working partly for love of the work, partly in the hope of getting ultimately his freedom, though in legal phraseology a slave is actually not so. "A slave who will work without direct compulsion is serving his apprenticeship for freedom." [1] We may agree and admit that, tried by this test, many a free citizen of a modern industrial community is more of a slave than a citizen of ancient Athens: but yet, when all is said, there were the slaves in the silver mines (20,000 of them) undergoing real slavery of the worst type—used up in cruelly hard labour without hope of alleviation; and how far did their slavery make possible the freedom of the citizens? Again, the drudgery that must be done in any state was done in Athens, not by the citizens but by the slaves, and it was through their drudgery that the full citizen got the leisure by which alone and by

[1] Zimmern: *The Greek Commonwealth.*

the right use of it he was able to fit himself for citizenship.

How far the acceptance of slavery detracted from the full attainment of the Greek ideal, the buildings, perhaps, will help us to estimate. If we look at an ancient Greek city, we see as its salient features, first a crowd of houses irregularly arranged—small white cubes with few windows and with scarcely any features to interest or attract. Secondly, above them and dominating, the public buildings, collected as at Athens on a great rock, ordered, adorned, arresting the attention at once and holding it. This dominance of the collective aspect of the city over the individual lets us at once into the secret of the principal pre-occupation of the citizen. He was not domesticated: his home counted for little. It was necessary, of course, but he reduced it to its lowest terms—just a little court with a series of rooms off it and a blank wall outside. All his active life was spent in the market-place, or in the temples, transacting the business of the city—debating, voting, administering its affairs. For him his city was its public buildings, not the private, his interest not his family, but the state.

When we examine the temples, again, we find very clear evidence of the state of mind of the people who raised them.

First, in contrast to those of Egypt, we are struck by the extreme simplicity of the plan, the open access to the god, the air and light within. The Greek had no use for mystery—a half-understood idea, a hinted effect, an incomplete conception was not worth his consideration. He demanded definition, completeness.

So in the construction of the temple and the execution of its ornament, the arrangement of its parts, he knew exactly what effect he wished to achieve and he achieved it. The Parthenon and the Erechtheum, for instance, are in the strictest sense of the word perfect.

Everything is thought out to a nicety ; the optical illusions that the human eye creates for itself (e.g. the apparent sagging of a horizontal beam) are corrected with the utmost care. The columns are ever so slightly swelled to correct the hollowing that is apparent in a regular cylinder, the outer columns, which stand clear against the void, are set a little nearer to their neighbours than the rest that have the temple wall behind them, to correct the appearance of too wide spacing that would otherwise result.

So too all the joints of the masonry are exquisitely fine, the ornament is inevitably correct in outline and repeated with exact

precision. The Greeks sought perfection and they got it : that is at once the summit of their attainment and the token of their limitations.

They took the simplest possible form of construction—the rectangular hall with the row of columns round it carrying lintels, and they made of it a thing of rare beauty because they spent infinite pains on the smallest and most insignificant details, despising nothing and leaving nothing to chance, and because they extracted from that single motive everything of which it was capable, exhausting its possibilities.

That was a triumph at which we are still wondering : but it was also a surrender.

To achieve perfection it is necessary to limit oneself. That honeysuckle ornament must never vary from its beautiful precision of outline. Make a drawing of it—the slightest inaccuracy and the effect is ruined. But to achieve that unwavering accuracy of repetition, you had to expel irregularity from the executant ; he had to forfeit invention and initiative and become a machine.

Again, if you are to attain perfection, you must key down your aspirations to the level of what you know you can accomplish. You cannot allow that a man's reach should exceed his grasp ; you rule out incompleteness ; you

dare not risk failure. "The Greeks, unlike the Jews, have nothing Quixotic in their nature. They never lead a forlorn hope unless they can persuade themselves that it is not forlorn."[1] You limit yourself to the simplest constructional forms, and you obtain your effects by repetition of perfect features.

Perfection really demands slavery. The columns and steps with their exquisitely finished surfaces, their faultless joints, their optical corrections calculated to a hair—all these demand patient, skilful, painstaking, above all docile labour, under unresting supervision, to exact instructions. When you allow a man to express himself, to put into his work all his ideas, all his hopes, you get imperfection at once. "If you will make a man of the working creature, you cannot make a tool. Let him but begin to imagine, to think, to try to do anything worth doing, and the engine-turned precision is lost at once. Out come all his roughness, all his dullness, all his incapability, but out comes the whole majesty of him also. . . ."[2]

We do not know how far the great Athenian temples were actually raised by those who were

[1] Zimmern: *The Greek Commonwealth.*

[2] Ruskin: *The Stones of Venice* ("The Nature of Gothic").

technically slaves, but we are as certain as can be that slave labour entered into their building.

It is difficult to determine also just how far Athenian democracy was rendered possible by slavery, but that the element of slavery must be taken into account is certain.

So, with all its beauty, Greek architecture is slave architecture.

The essentials of slavery are that the work should be mechanical and the motive of the worker compulsion: there is much purely mechanical work in Greek architecture. The characteristics of freedom are daring and experiment, and daring and experiment were excluded from Greek architecture. But Greek architecture is beautiful, as age after age has testified. Wherein lies its beauty? Partly from memory no doubt—the men and the deeds and the literature that tell about them—the whole Greek story which is so closely connected with them. (This association of ideas with things is extremely potent, and an element of beauty that cannot be ignored.) Partly, too, because it has the quality of rhythm—the seemingly inevitable response of feature to feature which affects the beholder like an air in music so that he is tickled and excited unawares—a quality difficult to describe, impossible not to recognize.

Finally, there is the magic of the South which is so intoxicating to a Northerner. The surprise of the brilliance of certain buildings and the depth of tone of the sky, in contrast to the opposite conditions of the North; the sun that draws the shadows with a soft black pencil, as it were, so different to the hard triple H to which we are accustomed here; all the fascination of the South, which throughout history is always luring the Northerner down, and which becomes articulate in the writings of half our poets. Greek architecture is great mainly through qualities which are independent of the worker — rhythm, memory, the magic of the South. The effect of the condition of the worker is seen in its defects—for the worker was a slave.

But it must be insisted that this slavery was as different as possible from the Egyptian slavery which we have been considering, or from modern plantation slavery in the tropics. Greek ingenuity had, for one thing, abolished some of the drudgery that had rendered the Egyptian corvée inevitable. A seafaring people, the Greeks brought in the windlass to their building work and raised their stones by the derrick.

Again, in the vivid life of a Greek city state even a slave (legally excluded from

it all) had a part, was conscious of sharing in it.

It is beyond the scope of this book to attempt to account for the Greek genius and suggest the source of the different elements that went to make up the wonderful life of Athens. Geographical position, climatic conditions no doubt account for much. The climate, so different to ours, with its sharply defined summer and winter, dry season and wet, the position of Greece in the thick of the Mediterranean world contrasted with the cul-de-sac of Egypt: the landscape of Greece with its stormy torrents, so often dry, its craggy mountains dividing city from city, the sea running in everywhere, the "abrupt change from green to purple and brown which tells where plain and cornland end and the goats of the mountain slopes begin" [1]—the effect of all these on the mental outlook of the people, on their habits and their political institutions—all these are described with wonderful vividness and intimate appreciation in Zimmern's *Greek Commonwealth*, and this must be read by any one who seeks to understand at all what Greek life really was.

[1] Zimmern: *The Greek Commonwealth.*

ROME AND BYZANTIUM: FROST AND THAW

There is little doubt that the Romans, if left to themselves, would have developed only the solid, or the gorgeous, or the baroque. . . .

TUCKER, *Life in the Rome of Nero and St. Paul.*

Until about the year 1000 there was little in Western art beside Byzantinism and barbarism, and up to this time the products of the various schools might better be called Byzantesque than Romanesque.

W. R. LETHABY, *Mediaeval Art.*

Photo Anderson.

COLISEUM AT ROME.

Photo Sebat and Joaillier.

ST. SOPHIA, CONSTANTINOPLE.

CHAPTER III

ROME AND BYZANTIUM: FROST AND THAW

When we move on from Greece to Rome, we are struck at once in the architecture by the combination of mere marking time in some respects with important advances in others: marking time in the forms employed to embellish their buildings, advance in the construction of the buildings themselves.

Here are, for instance, the Greek columns and capitals and entablatures again; here is the familiar egg and tongue ornament; here is the traditional temple plan. All are derived directly from the Greek, but all are different. Where the Greek sought with ardour and pertinacity the line that was inevitable, the Roman struck in the nearest approximation to it which he could manage with his compass. Where the Greek placed his ornament exactly where it would tell, wisely economical of its wealth, the Roman allowed it to sprawl wherever it could find a foothold, seeking the effect of profusion and attaining it. The Greek

refinements and corrections of optical illusions the Roman ignored, failing to see the necessity for them, one may suppose. In short, we have all the Greek features re-used and spoilt in the re-using, like great music ground out on a barrel organ.

On the other hand, while the Greek failed to get beyond the simplest and most childish methods of construction, the Roman launched out boldly. The vault and the dome became familiar to him; he discovered the convenience and ductility of concrete and elaborated complex plans and essayed hazardous structures. In huge theatres, in lofty aqueducts, in the great halls of baths, in bridges, in fortifications he tackled constructional problems involved in the demands of everyday life—the everyday of a huge and highly organized empire, and solved them with wonderful success. But while he is doing all this, while he is innovating, inventing, making discoveries, he is diffident about claiming them. He is distrustful of his powers; he has been taught to look to Greek architecture as the standard of good taste; he clothes his great carcases (as far as he can) in Greek dress and stretches the Greek garment to cover their huge nakedness. So the great rough pile of the Coliseum is faced with the Greek orders—columns and entabla-

tures which carry nothing, do no work, merely stand unemployed and try to look ornamental, like loungers propping up the wall of a public-house.

So the Greek frieze is arbitrarily bent round the arch, and columns with little slices of entablature on each stand before the giant piers of the baths and impudently pretend that their vault and mass construction is after all only the old familiar arrangement of upright and lintel.

There is no attempt, it must be noted, to adapt the traditional features to new functions—that would be in modern architectural phrase "unscholarly." It is the work of the Philistine intimidated by the connoisseur. In just the same way half a century ago the maker of railway carriages dared not have the courage of his convictions and strike out a new form of vehicle, but made them look as much like the bodies of stage coaches as possible; so too to-day the Tower Bridge dares not display its strange new form nakedly, but huddles it under baronial towers. In any country where art is not alive, the innovator is always in terror of the pointing finger of the superior person —"unprecedented"!

The outstanding features of Roman building effort, then, are great engineering works and

innumerable towns—towns distinctively Roman, planned and executed on a settled scheme, stamped with the imperial hall-mark. There had been little conscious town planning (though the later Greeks had made some interesting experiments, notably at Selinus)—towns grew, like Athens, like Rome itself.

Now, wherever the Roman legions went they founded towns of remarkably similar pattern: all were based in plan on the four-square Roman camp, with its straight intersecting main streets and straight intersecting minor streets; with its forum, temples, baths and so on. These Roman towns remain still, showing clear evidence of their origin, all over the Roman world from the Dee to the Danube, from the Rhine to the Mediterranean. One need not cite examples—they are to be found everywhere.

Sometimes the local community modified the plan (as at Silchester), but generally they are remarkably like each other, and, on a small scale, like Rome.

What was the character of the civilization that is embodied in these towns and their buildings?

First, we note that in the Roman Empire—thanks to the magnificent roads that tied to Rome all the different provinces, and thanks

to the admirably organized system of posts and transport between them—the connection of Rome with all towns was very close indeed. Hence the close imitation of Rome that is apparent even in the time of greatest local freedom; the municipal organization is modelled on that of the mother city, the local officials call themselves by the titles of the great officials at Rome, imitate their state, claim, even ludicrously, their honours. Long before centralization began, the provinces had assimilated themselves voluntarily to the central model.

Secondly, we note that these towns were built in a very great number of instances by soldiers. Everything was done to orders; the regulations were followed, inelastic as regulations, especially military regulations, always must be. Everything had to conform to the official plan, and that plan was simple, capable of being executed rapidly, by unskilled labour if necessary. It was inconvenient (as America is finding out, the gridiron plan is, from the absence of diagonal routes, very obstructive), and it took no account of natural features, contours, prevailing winds, prospects and so on, but it could be got into people's heads and repeated indefinitely, and that is no small recommendation to an official.

Thirdly, the town planning, the method of building, the scheme of decoration, all were suited admirably to the labour conditions under which the work had to be done.

What were these conditions? Who were the men who built the Coliseum, the Pont du Gard, the temples at Baalbec, the Roman wall at Hexham?

Once again our authority is Choisy.[1] We have seen that the buildings are not homogeneous; there is the carcase and there is the ornament applied to it—the two parts distinct and separate. This division, Choisy shows, represents two classes of workers. The rough work of concrete would be performed by slaves, by captives or by persons who were liable to the corvée (these corvées grew more and more oppressive as time went on, and the people more and more docile and submissive). Much of the work, too, as we have seen, was performed by soldiers. It was dangerous to leave them in idleness—leisure meant revolts and tumults—and works were constantly ordered solely in order to keep an army occupied. Concrete is a material admirably suited to this condition of industry—it is easily manipulated by unskilled labour, provided the labour is obedient and supervision vigilant.

[1] *L'Art de Bâtir chez les Romains.*

All this was essentially servile labour—indeed, a common punishment was the sentencing an offender to so many months " hard labour " on public works. It was actual, not nominal slavery—the work was monotonous, the impulse coercion.

The other part of the buildings, the decoration, was carried out by workmen or slaves of greater capacity. How were these workmen, skilled or unskilled, organized ?

In very early times the workers of Rome formed themselves into free societies—collegia—which seem to have been analogous, to some extent, to modern Trade Unions, in that they both looked after the trade interests of their members (they existed in every craft and occupation), and also provided " benefits," especially funeral benefit.

The exercise of the first function, however, brought them constantly into conflict with the state authorities, and they were suppressed (64 B.C.), revived (58 B.C.), and again suppressed under Augustus (with the exception of a few very old-established societies). The second function, payment of funeral benefit, however, was approved ; societies limited to that object were allowed to be formed freely, and it became the custom for those who sought office or popularity to become patrons and sub-

scribe liberally to them. Dill [1] suggests that probably other functions were worked in under the Provident Society constitution, but their utility as free associations of workers was destroyed when Hadrian officially recognized them, became their patron, made them part of the machinery of the empire, and so transformed a potential menace to the state into an efficient instrument for carrying out his vast building enterprises.

Men were now forced to join the collegia or were arbitrarily transferred from one to another; the remuneration of the different grades of workmen was fixed by the state; the workmen were organized in cohorts like an army; they were bound to unending servitude—themselves and their descendants—by the system of granting land to the collegia as compensation for work done, which land, held as it was individually by the members (with the obligation of service), descended to the heirs of the workman when he died. The workman was thus thoroughly enslaved, whether he was nominally free or not.

Even at the best the collegia were of but scanty value as organs of constructive effort by the workers. Their primary objects seem

[1] Sir Samuel Dill: *Roman Life in the time from Nero to M. Aurelius.*

always to have been social intercourse and the perpetuation of the memory of their members (always an obsession of the Roman). Within their organization the most petty distinctions of rank and calling were always most rigidly enforced. There was no real corporate feeling. Finally they became "Corporations, which, springing up at first spontaneously in defiance of Government or with its reluctant connivance, were destined under imperial control to petrify into an intolerable system of caste servitude in the last century of the empire of the West."

To sum up: What does Roman architecture represent? In its solidity of construction, its engineering adequacy, it embodies the eminently practical, rather oppressive and inhuman strength of the Roman system in which the individual is submerged in the incoherent mass—is enslaved. In its decoration, a veneer of features derived from an earlier civilization and misapplied, masking the real building, is reflected the culture, essentially artificial, assumed by the wealthy and powerful classes in the Roman Empire.

In its massiveness, in the lavishness of its decoration, in its luxury (alike in baths, palaces or private houses), it reflects that devotion to material things which is the real motive behind so much of the superficial religion of the Roman.

In its uniformity and regularity it betrays its authors and its executants. It is the architecture of officials brought into being by slaves.

Its claims to greatness rest upon size (a vulgar element which yet cannot be neglected); upon the name and tradition and splendour of Rome, still through all the ages potent, inescapable; finally (in its own Mediterranean home) on that magic of the South which we have referred to above.

It is slave architecture still in the West.

Byzantine Architecture.

But in the East there is a remarkable difference. There the fabric of the Empire, when it was swamped in the West by the Barbarian invasions, lasted for a thousand years longer. In the sixth century of our era, when Rome had almost ceased to exist, there rose at Constantinople in the Church of S. Sophia one of the great buildings of the world. There we have the characteristic Roman methods of construction—concrete walls, domes and piers—but instead of a decoration applied to and masking them, they are clothed with a garment (of mosaic and marble) which fits closely, follows their lines, reveals their shapes and glorifies them. There we have too the

columns and capitals, but instead of being employed merely as decorative features, they are at work, carrying loads, performing their proper function and sharing in the labours of the building. The Greek form of capital especially, instead of compromising uncomfortably with the arch and vault, for which it was not designed, now changes its form and is re-created, not merely made use of.

The capital now takes a form suited to its function, convex in shape, oblong in plan, to take the impost of the arches which it carries. In another form the impost block, set upon the capital proper, transmits the load to the column, relieving the angles of the capital of the weight. Every sort of shape is experimented with boldly and successfully; the acanthus leaves, which used to be so rigid and regular, now spring up more sharp and prickly and swirl round the capitals—the wind has caught them too.

New ornament is created, old forms are transmuted. Everywhere there is experiment. Procopius [1] tells of the accidents that occurred in the course of the church's building: the fears that the piers would fall and the arches collapse; the triumph when the great adventure justified itself. This is live building. It is

[1] Procopius of Cæsarea: *Of the Buildings of Justinian.*

not simply the repetition of the achievements of others ; it is not the obedient reproduction of official models. What made this jet of energy spring up? Who built S. Sophia, and how did they do it?

First, Justinian by most assiduous toil and by unexampled astuteness succeeded in devising a system that held in check for a time the forces of disintegration within and attack from without that threatened the Eastern Empire and had overwhelmed the Western.

The new forces that were stirring and that had been driven underground in Rome issue in constructive endeavour in Constantinople.

Secondly, although Justinian's government was an absolutism, it was a precarious absolutism, and although, as Gibbon says, " Taxation fell like a hailstone on the land, like a devouring pestilence on its inhabitants," yet the worker was beginning to be free—free industrially, and he was reaching that freedom through association.

Historians, following Gibbon, have devoted their attention too closely to the intrigues of a corrupt and luxurious court and to the murders of rival rulers. For us, who are concerned primarily with the rank and file of the people, the important fact to remember is that under Justinian we find the beginnings of

Freedom and Association among the workers—words which give the key to the development of architecture for the next ten centuries.

In Constantinople the Roman Collegia survived, but survived under changed conditions. In the West, as we have seen, the worker was tied to his organization, which was definitely under the state authority, a part of the state machinery. In the East the statutes limiting and penalizing the members of the collegia were abrogated. Further, Justinian's laws sanction immunities and privileges for the members. They are a protest against the oppressive treatment of the worker. The Western emperors tried to force the Greek to remain and work for them by legal constraint; the Eastern tried to encourage him to do so by granting him privileges. Work was still done by military labour as under the Roman emperors, the corvées also survived (though to a limited extent), but the fact that stands out especially in regard to the condition of the workers of the time is the freeing of their organizations from the direct control of the state, and in consequence their growing power (as evidenced from time to time in the tumults in Constantinople and in the interesting evidence given by Professor Bury of the right to petition the emperor and state their case before him that

was secured by the workers). Not only were the organizations becoming free from tyranny without, they became also more democratic within. The συνεργασιαι were associations of workers under an elected head. They were at once craft guilds, religious confraternities and benefit societies.[1]

But the most notable fact about them is that not only the skilled trades were organized, not only the aristocracy of labour, but unskilled workers, labourers, porters. Moreover, whereas in Roman times the principle of division of labour was the dominant note on the organization of the workers, in the Byzantine the principle was applied far less strictly; whereas in Roman times there was clear division of function, separate grades, clear division between those who worked on the carcase and those who worked on the ornamentation of it, in Byzantine work the same man's name is found on capitals and on simple ashlar. Choisy states, too, that everywhere in the East to-day work is done by a master-worker and his body of fellow-workers, who carry out the work together, each performing every sort of task, rough and smooth, construction and execution, and he gives the organization of the workmen's guilds in the East to-day, which have changed

[1] Choisy: *L'Art de Bâtir chez les Byzantins.*

very little if at all from the organization of the Byzantine Empire. "The workman," he sums up, "is no mere passive instrument, obedient without any regard to initiative or responsibility to the workshop foreman: he is treated as an intelligent power, and finds in front of him liberty and a field open to his imagination." [1] "In the humblest work," say Lethaby and Swainson,[2] "the personality of the worker is delightfully expressed." In the last analysis, what do we find as the motive power of this surprising outburst of creative building? It is a power which we shall perceive working more freely, displaying its characteristics more clearly in the buildings of the next great epoch. It is a power that springs from a changed outlook, from a new ideal of life; which slowly penetrated mankind as Christianity spread through Europe. It arises from a faith that dares to fail, that descries attainment in aspiration, that finds infinite worth in the humblest individual and finds in his freedom the secret of that truth and that beauty which is denied to the wise and prudent.

For its fuller manifestation we must look to the era of Gothic.

[1] Choisy: *L'Art de Bâtir chez les Romains.*
[2] *The Church of S. Sophia, Constantinople.*

GOTHIC I: ADVENTURE

Let us watch him with reverence as he sets side by side the burning gems, and smooths with soft sculpture the jasper pillars, that are to reflect a ceaseless sunshine and rise into a cloudless sky: but not with less reverence let us stand by him, when, with rough strength and hurried strokes, he smites an uncouth animation out of the rocks which he has torn from among the moss of the moorland, and heaves into the darkened air the pile of iron buttress and rugged wall, instinct with a work of an imagination as wild and wayward as the northern sea; creations of ungainly shape and rigid limb, but full of wolfish life; fierce as the winds that beat, and changeful as the clouds that shade them.

JOHN RUSKIN, *The Nature of Gothic.*

CHAPTER IV

GOTHIC I: ADVENTURE

BETWEEN the sixth century and the tenth stretches the period called the Dark Ages. In Constantinople the building art speedily declines. Lethaby says that the Eastern wars and the Iconoclastic dispute broke the tradition of Hellenesque-Byzantine style. Choisy attributes its decline to the overwhelming influence of the priests, which stereotyped the style, and to the paralysis that followed the growth of hereditary exclusiveness in those who built.

Constantinople served for centuries as the bulwark of Europe against its foes from the East, but there was nevertheless steady deterioration, and by the end of the tenth century Oriental and barbarous elements had permeated its government, commerce, army and rulers.

Rome and Italy were submerged under Barbarian invasions, and only gradually is some sort of order produced out of the chaos that resulted.

Yet from about the year 1000 onwards for five

centuries we have all over Europe an outburst of building energy that has never been surpassed. Churches, guildhalls, castles cover the country so thickly that even to-day, after centuries of conflict, destruction and neglect, thousands remain—thousands of buildings infinitely varied, individual and entrancing, messengers from the past that are still waiting for us to listen to their story, heralds of a future that we are just beginning to glimpse. What was the course of development of the building in those centuries when Europe was gradually working back from chaos to order again? What was the development of man's ideas that is embodied in those buildings? We find first, as we should expect, a patching and repairing rather than any creative work. Rome was dead, but the idea of Rome was still potent, its traditions ineradicable. The old buildings, therefore, where they had fallen into ruin, were repaired. Old materials were re-used in something like the old way—old columns and capitals and entablatures were dug up and dragged upright and used again. Italy is full of them. Existing buildings were put to new uses (e.g. basilicas). With the diminished population there were enough old buildings left and to spare. Tradition and custom were strong, initiative and invention were weak; men had

turned to destruction rather than creation, the task was to meet present needs somehow, not to adventure.

Next we find the beginnings of the reconstruction of Europe.

Charles the Great hammers together a solid and coherent mass; buildings arise, as at Aachen—solid too. Men cease to make the best of old remains: they build afresh—roughly, indeed, but with energy and aspiration.

Charles' empire fell to pieces. Norsemen raided the Western coasts; Saracens threatened Italy and France and were all powerful in the Mediterranean; Magyars and Slavs invaded Europe from the East. The Church was corrupt; nobles, selfish and cruel, oppressed the common people remorselessly; kings were weak and their kingdoms crumbling to pieces. Chaos prevailed again.

But Feudalism by the beginning of the tenth century had saved Europe from the invaders; Henry the Fowler in Germany beat back foes from the East and founded and fortified towns to secure his frontiers. The Norsemen settled down in the West and founded their one permanent realm in Normandy; the Christians in Spain, profiting by the divisions of Islam, were getting the upper hand of the

Moors, and they too founded towns of Castile to guard their borders.

Then the power that has slowly been building itself up all this time in the ruins of old Rome—the Christian Church—plunges at last into its great task of re-creation and sets itself to build out of chaos Christendom. Cluny was founded in 910 and began an era of religious reform and revival (Carthusians founded 1080, Cistercians 1098, Augustinians 1105). In 1077 Gregory the Seventh won his memorable triumph over Henry the Fourth at Canossa.

After the passing of the fatal year 1000, a great torrent of religious enthusiasm broke out. Missionaries spread the faith North, East and West, and where the missionaries went the builders followed. Up the Rhine (first the frontier of the Church, then the "Bishop's corridor"), far away in Britain (St. Bartholomew's the Great), down in the South of France (St. Front Perigueux) we find great churches rising, churches which have remarkable diversity in expression, remarkable similarity in essentials; in which we see the old principle of stability—resisting thrust by mass—gradually giving way to experiments in equilibrium, resisting thrust by thrust. In which, again, we see roughness, savagery and

licence gradually becoming purged and transformed into freedom, grotesqueness and grace.

What is the character that is common to all these churches? Up to the year 1000 it is Byzantesque. Who were the builders? It seems certain that they were members of that masonic guild whose power and enterprise we have remarked at Constantinople under Justinian.

We saw that the Byzantine workman had, by association with his fellows, freed himself from those restrictions which had made the Roman workman a slave, and had begun to organize free self-governing guilds, which, while independent of the central authority, had yet begun to take part in municipal life. Now during the Middle Ages the guild idea still persisted as in Constantinople, and members of the masons' guild, wandering all over Europe, kept the old principle alive.[1] Hence the com-

[1] We know that special privileges and protection were granted to the members of the guild by the Pope.

Professor Lethaby notes that the Order of the Arti in Florence in the thirteenth century follows closely the Byzantine models of the ninth: that the guild regulations of Paris are similar; that the Byzantine word for mason (λατωμος) is used in both France and England in the thirteenth century.

Leader Scott (in *The Cathedral Builders*) traces the journeys of Byzantine masons in the train of missionaries.

mon character with local variations in the great buildings: the one was due to the common training and tradition that the guildsmen shared, the other to the local conditions in men, materials and climate.

But apart from the ubiquity of this one guild, it is clear that the unique organization of the Church is mainly responsible for the great building achievement. In an age of continual conflict and universal insecurity the monastery offered the one place where the arts could grow and expand—there was safety, there were workshops, there was accumulated material. There, too, was the latest information on processes, experiments, achievements, passed on from monastery to monastery; there, in short, alone was the machinery essential for that pre-eminently co-operative art—Architecture.

Here, then, is a great fellowship—the Church, growing, soaring, adventuring; here is a great association of men seeking with ardour and devotion to give worthy expression to the soul of that fellowship. Let the world outside be what it will, this makes for experiment, growth, triumph.

But alongside of this organization of the Church expands a parallel movement in the towns. Whether or not the guild organiza-

tion can be traced back to the Roman Collegia —still maintaining a tradition and preserving a framework of organization through the Dark Ages—it is certain that guilds sprang up independently also, bred naturally from the dangers and difficulties of the time. Brentano[1] traces the original religious guilds—" sworn fraternities for the protection of right and the preservation of liberty " directly to the family, to the development of needs greater than the family could satisfy, and the forming, therefore, of an organization modelled upon it but wider in scope. These guilds were independent of the towns, but in the twelfth century arose and multiplied the guilds proper—the Guilds Merchant—which were practically associations of citizens for the protection of their towns (again a natural outcome of the insecurity inherent in the Feudal system). Originally co-extensive with the male population of the town, the Guilds Merchant tended, after the initial struggles were over and some security attained, to become exclusive, to be restricted to those citizens who owned a certain amount of property. Membership tended to become hereditary ; the craftsmen and all who worked at manual occupations were debarred from participation in the guilds, which tended to become oppressive

[1] Brentano: *Origin of Guilds and Trade Unions.*

oligarchies. This state of affairs was responsible for the formation of the craft guilds—organizations of the workers on lines exactly similar to those of the Guild Merchant, but democratic and inclusive of all members of the craft concerned.

Brentano gives in detail the history of the early struggles of the craft guilds with the "patricians," and sketches their progress from unauthorized unions of workmen to recognized responsible institutions, the representative body in every town. The time of the origin of the craft guilds extended from the eleventh to the middle of the thirteenth century. By the middle of the fourteenth century the craft guilds were victorious everywhere. Edward the Third gave his approval to them and himself joined the linen-armourers.

As has been said, the Feudal system had beaten back external foes; towns now arose to modify and control the Feudal system. Everywhere towns grew powerful—at important trade centres (as Cologne), at the foot of a castle (as at Falaise), round a monastery or church (as at St. Edmundsbury). Some were of Roman origin (like Chester), some were founded as frontier fortresses (as in Brandenburg and Castile), some were the work of a king with a talent for town planning (Aigues-Mortes by St.

Louis, Winchelsea by Edward the First). There are towns of Gables in Germany, there are towns of Towers in Italy. There are stone towns and brick towns and wooden towns. They can be classified endlessly. The important point to remember is that in the Middle Ages it is towns that count rather than territories. From the time when the Lombard Republics beat Frederick Barbarossa, the towns are the foremost fighters for freedom. Legnano in 1172 is echoed by Courtrai in 1302.

Patriotism is municipal, not national, for nations scarcely exist. The great leagues of towns in Italy, on the Rhine, in North Germany and in the Low Countries foster the arts, police the roads and seas, regulate trade and control the sinews of wars. What was the internal organization of towns in general, what were the aims of their policy ?

Generalizing very widely (for their variety is infinite), the government of the town was based upon the trade organization of its citizens. The varying constitutions of Florence (the most perfect example) are founded solely on the principle of the representation of the different arts, in one of which every citizen would be enrolled.

The policy of the towns was to secure stability by assuring self-sufficiency. Their

whole system depended on the practical immobility of labour—in the town a practically stationary population ; outside a rural population fixed on the land and supporting itself on the land and so offering no competition with the worker in the town. Given stable groups, the guild organization could cover the industries in each group and regulate them in accordance with the wishes of its members.

The aim of these regulations was (having eliminated competition from without the group) to ensure good workmanship and to maintain fair play among competitors within it. The guilds regulated sales, weights and measures, processes and apprenticeship—every side of industry.

The anxiety of the towns to prevent lowering their standards by competition from without, their fear of losing a cherished monopoly, too, led to those long drawn out struggles between towns—Bruges and Ghent, Venice and Genoa, or, indeed, almost any pair of cities, especially in Italy. But where leagues of towns were formed this tendency to monopoly was distributed over a wider area, and thus regulations became not merely municipal, but world-wide.

It followed, of course, that with all this legislative work of regulating processes and conditions, this administrative work of decid-

ing knotty points and judging disputes, the chief men of the guilds became officials of the town; they were clearly the best qualified for the posts. M. Georges Renard [1] has detailed very clearly in his book the multiplicity of duties that fell to the lot of guild master, with excellent summaries of the different constitutions of different sorts of guilds. What we have specially to note here is that: First, in towns the guilds included practically all the citizens. That is to say, there was a real demand for products, i.e. a demand by those who were themselves engaged directly in production, who knew what they wanted and could judge of its quality by some standard other than its price, who were, in a word, experts. There was at once the speaker and the hearer—both of whom are necessary, Thoreau tells us, if Truth is to be spoken; and Truth is Beauty. There was sympathy between the worker and his clients, who were also workers; men were unequal in power, riches, social standing, but industrially they were essentially equal.

Secondly, it is to be noted that the building guilds, with which we have specially to do, were unique in their genuinely democratic organization. "Inequality," writes M. Renard,

[1] *Guilds in the Middle Ages.*

" could be, theoretically at least, only temporary, since the master had once been a journeyman, the journeyman was a prospective master, and the apprentice in his turn would climb to the top of the ladder. This state of things, however, was only to be met with in the building trades, in small industry and 'small' commerce—the most numerous, it is true, but not the most powerful. There alone was almost realized the idyllic picture of the workman working in the workshop beside his master, sharing his life, eating at his table, his partner in joys and sorrows, joining him in public processions and ceremonies until the day when he himself should rise to be a master."

Thirdly, that the town worker was, on the whole, undoubtedly better off in the Middle Ages than he is to-day. Thus Renard again: " I limit myself to stating that historians are almost unanimous that, taking into consideration that less was spent on food, rent and furniture, and above all on intellectual needs (because both the demands were less and the prices low), it was easier for a workman's family to make both ends meet in those days than it is now. . . . It is not too much to say that materially the position of the journeyman was at least equal to, if not superior to that of the

workman to-day. It was also better morally. He sometimes assisted in the drawing up and execution of the laws of the community; he was his master's companion in ideas, beliefs, education, tastes. Above all, there was the possibility of rising any day to the same social level."

We have, then, in the early Middle Ages as the principal characteristics of the European peoples men closely associated in small communities, working together under common rules, with a common tradition, but also with freedom to experiment. We have intense consciousness in these groups of their duties and privileges as fashioners of order out of chaos, as fighters for freedom against tyranny. We have further the reawakening of commerce and industry in Europe, and, in consequence, the accumulation of material resources and the expansion and elaboration of the demands of men for the products of industry. Finally, there is, after the passing of the fatal year 1000, when it was thought the world was coming to an end, a great religious revival. A Church spreading far and wide commanded the widespread affection of all men, demanded and received the fruit of their most ardent endeavours, provided an outlet for their accumulated resources, above all penetrated them with the

principle of a faith which was the same for all. Men took the same things for granted, they surveyed the world from the same view point. There was sympathy in the fullest sense of the word, and because this was so the greatest possible individual freedom was allowable. In the building art especially the workmen could be allowed to work out their own peculiar ideas to the uttermost, because their thinking in tune with each other gave assurance that the result would be not chaos, but harmony.

A world in which these conditions ruled, then, boiled up into that remarkable era of building activity which we call Gothic.

What is Gothic ? Ruskin has described it in his chapter in *The Stones of Venice* on "The Nature of Gothic"—a chapter that proclaims for all time the characteristics of great architecture and the necessary conditions for its production. Lethaby has summed it up in a chapter in *Mediaeval Art*, which must be quoted because it gives in half a dozen luminous sentences the essence of the whole thing.

"Gothic architecture was developed by free and energetic experiment: it was organic, daring, reasonable and gay. The measure of life is the measure of Gothic. . . . As to these marvellous buildings [the great cathedrals] the half of their glories and wonder cannot be

told. They are more than buildings, more than art: something intangible was built into them with their stones and burnt into their glass. The work of a man, a man may understand, but these are the work of ages, of nations. All is consistent development, stone is balanced on stone, vault springs from vault, interlacing tracery sustains brilliantly dyed glass as branches hold sun-saturated foliage, towers stand firm as cliffs, spires are flung into the air like fountains. In these buildings all may be explained as devised for ritual use; all for the instruction of the people; all as material and structural necessity; all as traditional development; all as free beauty and romance in stone. From whichever point of view we approach them, the great cathedrals satisfy us, and their seeming perfections are but a part of a larger perfection. Nothing is marked, nothing is clever, nothing is individual or thrust forward as artistic; they are serene, masterly, non-personal, like works of nature. Indeed they are such, natural manifestations of the minds of men working under the impulse of a noble idea."

Examples of Gothic are, fortunately, everywhere before us—sometimes ruinous, sometimes caricatured, sometimes defaced, but always more or less legible.

One is astonished at the elasticity of the style; it is subdued into symmetry at Salisbury, piled into irregularity at Rouen; it soars into dizzy glory at Beauvais and Amiens, broadens into the welcoming embrace of Exeter. It can be as gay as a child dancing, as in that little late chapel at Amboise; it can be as grave as solemn music, as in St. Ouen, at Rouen. It draws out into a delicate cluster of verticals, as in St. George's, Windsor, and St. Mary Redcliffe, at Bristol, or it can bind together the soaring lines of Salisbury with bold horizontals, ruled again and yet again on base and buttress. It tells its message in the purest speech in the great cathedrals, and repeats it in the most charming provincial dialects in village churches. It is solid in the town halls of Italy (in Florence and Siena); it is opulent, even ostentatious, in the guildhalls of Belgium (Brussels and Ghent). It is plain to baldness in the brick churches of Lubeck; crowded with a riot of ornament in St. Maclou at Rouen; wide-spaced, airy, simple in our perpendicular churches of East Anglia; narrower, obscure, intricate in earlier churches in the South.

It adapts late work to early with the happiest results (as in the vaulting to the choir of the cathedral at Oxford), or carves up the older work to the fashion of a later day (as at Glouces-

ter and Winchester). Like the pointed arch itself it is capable of a hundred varieties of form, but it retains the same character throughout. Always it displays that unmistakable unity in variety which is the fruit of Freedom and Association. And further, everywhere we find examples of Gothic which give us that shock of recognition which is the witness to genius, that physical sensation—a quickening of the pulse, shortening of the breath, even tears in the eyes, which assures us, this is Beauty.

This it is that in the last analysis distinguishes great architecture from merely good architecture, or just adequate building. When you turn out of the market-place at Beauvais and come suddenly upon the towering roof, the soaring, springing buttresses, the grave, sweet windows of the apse of the cathedral, you get that unmistakable thrill. So too when you come into the stillness and gloom of the Abbey from the tumult of Westminster outside—there it is, magic, inexplicable.

We cannot fathom it, but it may be suggested that one of the reasons that it touches us is that it is built up on the labours of common, ordinary men like ourselves. The building embodies not only their hopes, but their fears and hesitations; not only their successes, but their

failures. We see in it aspiration, not attainment, struggles, not security. It appeals to our imagination, it pleads for our sympathy—it is human.

But it embodies too the greatest and highest efforts of the spirit of man, the good moments that we all have now and then, the rare occasions when we seem to see what life means and hold the knowledge for a moment, when we seem to get a glimpse of the hem of the garment of God.

To that do we owe "Those fair fronts of variegated mosaic, charged with wild fancies and dark hosts of imagery, thicker and quainter than ever filled the depths of midsummer dream : those vaulted gates trellissed with close leaves, those window labyrinths of twisted tracery and starry light ; those misty masses of multitudinous pinnacle and diademed tower ; the only witnesses perhaps that remain to us of the faith and fear of nations. All else for which the builders sacrificed has passed away, all their living interests and aims and achievements. We know not for what they laboured and we see no evidence of their reward. Victory, wealth, authority, happiness, all have departed, though bought by many a bitter sacrifice. But of them and their life and their toil upon the earth, one evidence, one reward is

left to us in those grey heaps of deep-wrought stone. They have taken with them to the grave their powers, their honours and their errors ; but they have left us their adoration." [1]

To realize fully what a Gothic building is, one must make drawings of it—drawings to scale, enforcing accurate measurement, close study of every detail ; only so do you realize the resourcefulness of the builders, the astonishing variety in their treatment of building problems. For any one who cannot do this a study of Viollet-le-Duc's *Dictionnaire Raisonné de L'Architecture*, with its illuminating exposition of building processes, and its beautifully clear illustrations, will throw a great deal of light on the subject, and will make him see a building afterwards not as a solid lump of material, but as an assembly of living, struggling forces, compacted together and balanced by the cunning deftness of the builders, and spellbound into immobility so long as the scheme they devised remains unbroken.

Above everything he will realize that with Gothic we have living building. In Egyptian, Greek, Roman, even Romanesque the force that keeps the building stable is inertia—the resistance of mass to movement. In Gothic

[1] Ruskin : *The Seven Lamps of Architecture* (" The Lamp of Sacrifice ").

the constructional principle is the resistance of movement to counter-movement—thrust to thrust. Thus in Gothic buildings the effect is not paralysis but arrested motion.

The same qualities that we have noted in individual buildings characterize towns as a whole. In England, as we shall see later, the industrial revolution was so thorough and so penetrating that very few towns escaped its destructive and submersive impact. We have not the almost untouched walled towns of Italy, nothing like Rothenburg in Bavaria, or even towns with as much of their history visible as Falaise or St. Malo. But here and there—in Rye, for instance, in Sussex—you catch glimpses of what the town used to be like. Once a port, whose fishermen and sailors were known far and wide, it now looks out across a mile of flat meadow and barren shingle to the sea. Built on a steep hill—precipitous indeed on one side—it has some of its walls and gates still remaining. It has a land gate —two bold drum towers with the entrance between them, and the Ypres tower, recalling its former trade relations with the Low Countries. Inside the walls are steep, narrow, cobbled streets, brick and tiled houses huddling one above the other, and looking over each other's shoulders at the sea, and over all in the

centre of the town the sturdy, ample church with its little close around it.

The qualities that would strike a visitor most, one fancies, in such a town would be first the clear-cut boundaries—the town ends at the wall; there are no straggling suburbs or untidy no-man's land.

And secondly, the harmony of the whole in spite of the varying age, style, size and pretensions of the buildings.

Lastly, the captivating contrasts of light and shade (therein typical of the Middle Ages themselves) in the narrow streets—seen especially vividly in the very steep, cramped streets of St. Malo—dark with sudden splashes of sunlight, airless with sudden draughts of air, and, every now and then, the surprise of a sudden turn of the street bringing you to its end abruptly, and the dazzling expanse of twinkling waves and rocky islands and the brilliant sky spread out before you.

There is not space to discuss here towns generally—to contrast the brick towns of Germany, with their spiky turrets and pantiled, steep gabled houses and huge gaunt churches with copper spires, with the stone towns of the Loire, with their creamy walls and grey slate roofs, set among rushing rivers; or to compare the red-brown somnolence of the broad, tree-

lined streets of the Hague with gold-brown, motionless, watchful Florence—in repose but listening, alert, watchful.

Or one might distinguish and classify the towns by their origin—Old towns (Roman), Castle towns (that grew up round a castle), Church towns (round a church); or by function —Trading towns, Fortress towns.

For our purpose the fact to remember is that the Mediaeval town was like the Greek city state, a self-sufficient unit, but that, unlike the Greek city state, it was bound to its fellows by the living faith which was common to them all and the wide-embracing organization which embodied that faith. Through the Middle Ages the course of history is the supersession of intense municipal loyalties (modified by common homage to Church and Empire) by national loyalties, unchecked by a Church which broke into fragments and an Empire that came to exist only in name. (The growth of the House we must follow in the next chapter, with the decline and fall of Gothic.)

It remains to summarize the meaning of Gothic at its best.

First, it was the fruit of real co-operation. The workers contributed not only execution, but invention. Controlled as he was by the

traditions handed down in the guild and by the customary methods of treatment which it taught, new forms were continually evolved, existing forms infinitely varied, but the result was harmony, not anarchy.

Secondly, it was imperfect. The Gothic builders were always daring new feats, attempting hazardous constructions and sometimes failing, but always (and this is its glory) implying growth, aspiration, adventure.

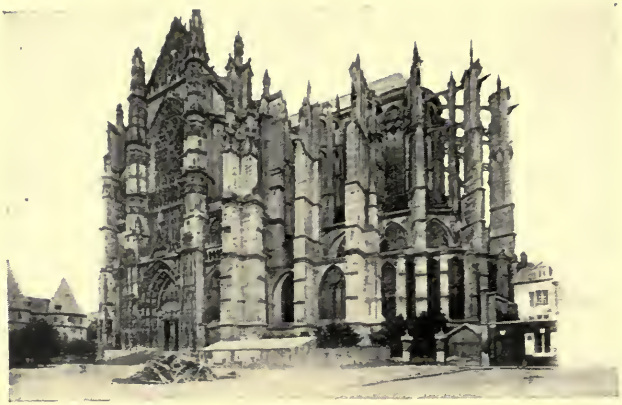
Finally, it is human. A Gothic building is not the obedient carrying out of the ideas of an artist for the admiration of a connoisseur, it is the sum of the aspirations and endeavours of a body of workers appealing to their fellow-workers, bound in sympathy with them by ties of common outlook, common social condition and, above all, common religion.

A great cathedral is the creation of the workers no less than the architect; it is the product, too, of the desires of their fellows—the common people for whom both the details of its sculpture and the symbolism of its construction made up a Bible, a book that every one could understand. That is Gothic at its prime.

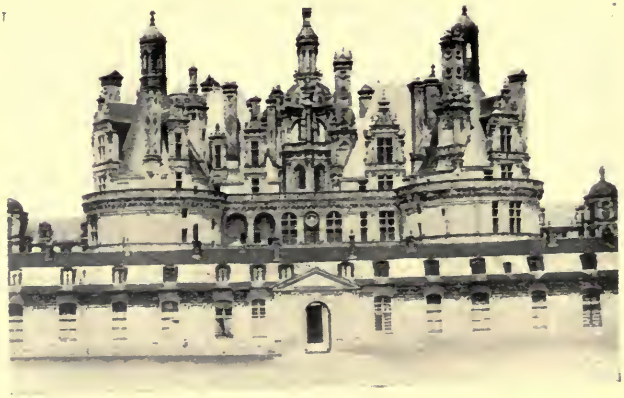
GOTHIC II: EXULTATION

The lesson which Ruskin . . . teaches us, is that art is the expression of man's pleasure in labour; that it is possible for man to rejoice in his work, for, strange as it may seem to us to-day, there have been times when he did rejoice in it; and lastly, that unless man's work once again becomes a pleasure to him, the token of which will be that beauty is once again a natural and necessary accompaniment of productive labour, all but the worthless must toil in pain and therefore live in pain. So that the result of the thousands of years of man's effort on the earth must be general unhappiness and universal degradation—unhappiness and degradation, the conscious burden of which will grow in proportion to the growth of man's intelligence, knowledge and power over material nature.

WILLIAM MORRIS,
Preface to Ruskin's "Nature of Gothic."



THE CATHEDRAL, BEAUVAIS.



THE CHÂTEAU, CHAMBORD.

CHAPTER V

GOTHIC II: EXULTATION

In the last chapter a description was given of Gothic architecture at its prime, and a sketch of the conditions that produced its finest manifestations. These conditions did not, of course, prevail universally at any given time. Only in a few cases would you find the guild system approximating really closely in practice to the ideals which it professed; only here and there did the happy conjunction of religious enthusiasm, industrial freedom, material resources soar up into the perfected Gothic. The Middle Ages were by no means Golden Ages. Side by side with shining faith went blindfold superstition; tyranny and freedom existed together: the glorious structure of civic freedom at Rouen is matched by the dungeons of Loches. Men were capable of amazing heroism and incredible cruelty. The wonderfully beautiful character of St. Louis even is clouded by his bitter persecution of heretics. The lights were very bright, one fancies, the shadows very dark. The alternate

sunlight and gloom of the Mediaeval town (just described), the light-hearted revels of the ornament, the grim savagery of the grotesques of a cathedral, portray sharply the contrast that characterized Mediaeval society. One may suggest that life was short and hazardous, but was felt to be well worth having while you had it, in contrast to the prevailing security of life to-day in a community that is far less certain of the value of the life it possesses. (It will be noted in this connection that modern architecture fails signally to achieve beauty or grotesqueness, but strikes a level inoffensiveness.)

Love of civic independence degenerated constantly into hatred of the independence of others—as in the endless inter-municipal conflicts in Italy. The guildsman's pride in his craft lapsed often into a dog-in-the-manger exclusion of would-be sharers in it. There is never a golden age in history, there is never the reign of one system; only the decline of some, the rise of others, interwoven, concurrent. For the sake of clearness, generalizations are made, the main streams indicated, but the cross-currents are always there and must never be forgotten. Even in the heyday of Mediaeval Gothic, for instance, Italy remained a little apart from the main stream,

adopting Gothic forms but not Gothic principles. Long after Gothic had died, Oxford went on building true Gothic buildings. There are no clear-cut periods, really, no mutually exclusive systems—only intertwining tendencies.

We have considered Gothic in its prime. Why did it decline and fall? In the first place, the economic basis of the society that created it was radically changed by the birth of the Capitalist system of production.

Hobson [1] summarizes the essential conditions for the existence of that system thus:—

"First, a production of wealth not required to satisfy the current wants of its owners and therefore saved. Second, the existence of a proletariat or labouring class deprived of the means of earning an independent livelihood by putting their labour into materials which they can freely appropriate, purchase or hire, consuming or selling the product for their own advantage. Third, such a development of the industrial arts as enables indirect methods of production to afford profitable employment to organized labour groups using tools or machinery. Fourth, the existence of large, accessible markets with populations willing and economically able to consume the products of capitalist industry. Fifth, the capitalist spirit, or the desire and

[1] *Evolution of Modern Capitalism.*

the capacity to apply accumulated wealth to profit making by the organization of industrial enterprise."

Now the first of these conditions was fulfilled by the discovery and appropriation of the precious metals. Wealth had been accumulated throughout the Middle Ages, but until it had been "monetized," it could not be employed as a basis of profit.

The final collapse of the Byzantine Empire (1452), which opened the near East to the exploitation of the West, and the great discoveries (1492), provided the required medium for capitalist enterprise. Further, the same events put a large slave proletariat at the disposal of Europe as a whole, while in England the same result followed the transition from tillage to sheep farming (which was brought about by the Flemish demand for wool), impinging on an industrial order which had been violently disintegrated by the abandonment of the traditional system of tenure of the rural worker which the Black Death caused. This industrial revolution made pasture profitable, and so led to wholesale enclosures, the formation of large pasture farms under new men whose aims were very different from those of the old nobility, and the conversion of the yeoman and landed labourer into the landless wage earner.

The transition from agriculture to sheep farming meant, of course, the employment of far fewer people; the enclosures deprived thousands of their home and living. "The husbandmen," wrote Sir Thomas More, "be thrust oute of their owne . . . by one means therefore or other they must needes departe awaye, poore, selye, wretched soules, men, women, husbandes, wives, fatherlesse children, wofull mothers with their yonge babes and their whole household, smal in substance and much in numbre, as husbandrye requireth manye handes. Awaye they trudge, I say, out of their knowen and accustomed houses, fyndynge no place to rest in. . . ." [1]

They trudged to the towns, and the guildsmen of the towns, looking out on this ragged multitude that streamed towards them, saw their hard won security threatened, their precious standards of workmanship dragged down, their whole structure of municipal organization shattered.

What should be their policy in face of this threat of devastating competition from outside? Should they admit these men to their organizations, or exclude them from both guild and craft? The former seemed impossible, implying a lowering of the standard of

[1] *Utopia.*

production and of the standard rate; they could not give away their "mysteries" broadcast. They decided on exclusion. They made entrance to the guilds more and more difficult, they demanded greater and greater privileges, they sought to avert by regulation that competition which was the negation of the whole basis of their industrial system.

Temporarily they won. But the craftsmen are not now the whole body of citizens, organized in their callings: they are a privileged class, a body set apart from their fellows —"artists." But outside their ranks there is a gathering crowd, restless, indignant. The "working class," unknown before, comes into existence. "One of the main results of the triumphant guild system," writes Mrs. J. R. Green,[1] "was to develop throughout the country a formless, incoherent multitude of hired labourers, who could by no possibility rise to positions of independence, and had no means of association in self-defence. As the weaker members of the crowd from time to time sank back into utter penury, the outcasts of the industrial system slowly gathered into a new brotherhood of the destitute, and even in the fifteenth century, long before they had been reinforced by the waifs and strays of town

[1] *Town Life in the Fifteenth Century.*

and country that flocked to their sad fellowship on the dissolution of the monasteries, the advance guard of that army of paupers appears in the streets of the boroughs to trouble the councils of municipal rulers."

Like the old Guilds Merchant the Craft Guilds have become unrepresentative. Like the craftsmen of the early Middle Ages, too, these excluded workers will have to organize themselves and in their turn, centuries later, win their independence and the right to determine, themselves, how they shall work, and what they shall work at; and they will base the organization of the state on the system that they have created.

For the time the old guilds preserved an artificial existence (the real artificers of the new order being the companies of Merchant Adventurers, which now arose to explore the new lands and exploit the new resources which had been discovered). The worker was being transformed from a free and largely independent citizen, associated closely with his fellows and controlling with them the conditions of his labour, into a wage earner, without influence on the methods or purposes of the productive machine of which he was a part, an instrument in the hands of the capitalist and yielding profit to him.

The word "instrument" recalls Aristotle's phrase, "A slave is a live instrument of the higher intelligence." [1] We are reverting to the conditions that produced Classic art—a return to Classic forms was inevitable.

Besides the shattering of the economic basis of the old order, there was the disintegration of the religious unity which assisted so materially to bind it together. The Church in the Middle Ages, as we have seen, was the one stable institution in a world of shifting struggling groups. It was the one organization that was definitely supernational, and that embodied beliefs and aspirations that were common to all, creating for the most widely separated communities a common point of view, a common outfit of things taken for granted. It stood, with all its faults and inconsistencies, for the idea of the brotherhood of all men, for the fatherhood of God and for what that implies—something greater than the mere collective attainments of the different units, a loving wisdom ordering the happenings of the world. It stood for the idea of the power of right as opposed to might, and of the supreme importance of the ultimate good of humanity as a whole in contrast to the passing interests of its individuals.

This great common possession of mankind

[1] *Politics*, bk. I, ch. iv.

in the West was shattered to pieces at the Reformation—inevitably apparently—and it has never been recovered.

Finally, the political bond, the idea of the Holy Roman Empire, rarely more than an idea, a tradition, a potential rather than an actual force—that bond grew weaker and weaker as it was strained by the growing power of Nationality, though its last strands did not part till nearly our own day.

Thus Freedom and Association—industrial freedom, spiritual association—were destroyed. Henceforth man was to exploit man in a world in which the brotherhood of man, if only as an idea, ceased to be held even in the background of men's thoughts, expelled as it was by the overwhelming demands of a patriotism which recognized no duties except to its own peculiar national group.

As a consequence the stream of invention (the result of freedom and experiment, which in their turn are only possible where the most intimate co-operation prevails) dried up. It was necessary to copy, therefore. The fall of Constantinople and the consequent scattering of its scholars with their Classical traditions over Europe, provided the necessary models. Provided, too, as we have seen, a style that was inherently suited to the new social and

industrial conditions that were coming into being. The Classical revival had begun.

The Renaissance, which meant the emergence of the individual, and which meant, therefore, so much to the other arts of man, was fatal to architecture, which is essentially co-operative in its methods. Henceforth the mark of approval in architecture will be the epithet "scholarly"—it is not any more the practice of a living art, it is the study of a dead language.

We may note three stages in its decline.

First, Gothic is still Gothic, but the exhibition of technical ability is the end rather than the means. The aim is no longer beyond achievement. St. Ouen, at Rouen, is the crest of the wave, infinitely touching, graceful, almost perfect, were it not that it is the culmination; you expect the petals of the rose to fall every moment. Its neighbour, St. Maclou, is overblown. The bowed West End, the interpenetrating mouldings, the luscious ornament, the gay little ingenuities in the carving, all point the same way—the builder is revelling in his skill,

> But all the play, the insight and the stretch
> Out of me, out of me![1]

[1] Browning: *Andrea del Santo.*

So, too, at Westminster, the choir is perfect early Gothic, the nave good middle Gothic, Henry the Seventh's chapel a glorious, gorgeous, triumphant *tour de force.* The architect is out to surprise you, and he does it; but that was not the purpose of his predecessors. So, too, you get the fine monotonous, opulent churches of East Anglia—rich men's churches, made to order, churches still Gothic, still splendid, but without the "first fine careless rapture," nevertheless.

The second stage is reached in the mixture of Gothic and Classic, chaotic but charming, as in the larger of the two churches at Falaise, or in some of the college chapels at Oxford, the Classic details inserted like a running comment on the margin of the Gothic text.

Finally, there is the definite crossing the border line in the ungrammatical Classic of Tudor and Jacobean work in England, François Ier in France. In these changes in buildings we have mirrored very faithfully the changing conditions of the time—the age of transition from the Mediaeval to the Modern system.

It will be noted, as the outstanding feature of the change, that buildings are raised now not so much to satisfy the demands of a com-

munity as to meet the wishes of eminent individuals.

The particular contribution of this period to the art of building is the Country House—either for the King (as at Chambord in France), or for great nobles (Holland House, or Burghley, or Hatfield), or for rich men (as Chenonceaux one of the châteaux of the Loire). Hitherto the insecurity of life in the Middle Ages had compelled the building of castles rather than dwellings. In the earlier period the lord of the castle, liable always to attack from neighbouring lords and from turbulent vassals, uncertain of the adherence of his immediate retainers, thrown on his own resources, was forced to build and maintain a stronghold of refuge as at Rochester or Falaise. With the growth of the central power, however, in England and France, that of the nobles declined, and, deprived of the occupation of continual forays and frequent combats, they found the gloomy restrictions of the fortress intolerable, and, after the fourteenth century, they begin to add more spacious rooms with large and lofty windows (as at Coucy, for instance). The inhabited fortress becomes a fortified habitation.

Later still, in the sixteenth century, the fortress character is, in England, abandoned

altogether, and the great Elizabethan houses—Kirby, Knole, Penshurst—are accessible from every side, wide windowed, open planned, evidence of a country stable and well ordered within, secure from attacks without. Evidence, too, of the growth of wealth and the concentration of that wealth in the hands of individuals.

It would be interesting to contrast in detail the great houses of England, France and Italy, but there is only space for a brief note. In contrast to the free, open security of the English country house, the French châteaux (Langeais, latter part of the fifteenth century, Amboise, latter part of fifteenth, finished middle of sixteenth century, Azay-le-Rideau, 1521, Chenonceaux, 1513, 1570) retain the corner turrets, the heavy small-windowed ground story, sometimes the narrow, easily defended spiral stone staircase (in contrast to the English open-newel wooden stairs), generally, too, the projecting *chemin de ronde* on corbels (for dropping missiles on the heads of assailants). At Azay and Chenonceaux, also, the moat and drawbridge are retained—all speak of a country still insecure and of the need of defence as well as convenience.

In Italy the most interesting buildings are town houses. From the early Middle Ages,

when the greater families in the town dwelt each in his tower, strong, thick walled, difficult to take, down to the great blocks of palaces of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, the character is that of a fortress, therein reflecting the endless internal quarrels of the townsmen, the constant overwhelming of the town by its enemies from without. The towers of San Gemignano near Siena are famous, but in every Italian city a considerable number still remain. The Renaissance palaces of Florence are a fine, impressive combination of residence, warehouse and fortress, with the fortress prevailing. Only in Venice, the most stable internally, the most impregnable externally of Italian cities, do the buildings take on a more open, approachable character. The Gothic Ca d'Oro, the Renaissance Vendramini Pesaro are wide windowed, richly adorned, luxurious palaces of wealthy merchants, serenely proud and inviting entrance. We shall have more to say about these in the next chapter. But in Italy the Classical Revival was merely a reversion to its real character, restoration of a tradition never altogether abandoned. The Italians never really understood Gothic as a structural system, though they produced a charming variety of it in form and ornament. Italian Gothic is the application of a beautiful

mask to a rough, uncouth carcase: it is not homogeneous, it is not, also, built up on the system of opposing thrusts, an assembly of living forces, wrestling together and held in suspense by their mutual invulnerability. It is, generally speaking, built on the ancient system that met thrust by mass and relies on inertia for stability. Perhaps the most characteristic feature, constructionally, in Italian Gothic is the use of the tie-rod to neutralize the outward thrust of arches. The builders recognized the force, but they disapproved of it, and, therefore, so far from welcoming it and setting to work with other forces to prop the structure, they fettered it.

Renaissance architecture in Italy, as might be expected, comes into being a full century earlier than elsewhere, and it reaches its full development almost at a bound; that is to say, its earlier tentative essays would elsewhere be considered mature: and it is in Italy, its own land, that it gains its most notable successes.

CLASSIC REVIVAL: PLAYTIME AND PEDANTRY

Architecture depends on fitness and arrangement; it also depends upon proportion, uniformity, consistency and economy.

VITRUVIUS.

I would not impeach love of order: it is one of the most useful elements of the English mind; it helps us in our commerce and in all purely practical matters; and it is in many cases one of the foundation stones of morality. Only do not let us suppose that love of order is love of art.

JOHN RUSKIN, *The Nature of Gothic.*

Photo London Stereoscopic Co.

HATFIELD HOUSE.

KING'S CROSS STATION.

CHAPTER VI

CLASSIC REVIVAL: PLAYTIME AND PEDANTRY

THE change from Gothic architecture and its distinctive methods to Classic is shown most dramatically at Florence. Leader Scott, in *The Cathedral Builders*, has given a detailed account, gathered from the books of the Opera del Duomo, which furnish a very full diary of its construction, of the determined and successful effort of Brunelleschi to impose his autocratic direction upon the builders of the cathedral. There is shown the usual method of the guild, the masters meeting together and taking decisions on every sort of point as it arose in all the buildings on which they were engaged; deciding to whom to entrust such and such a piece of work, what rations to allow, what pay, what materials to buy, how to get over such and such difficulties. The schools also that they administered in connection with their workshops—architecture, painting and sculpture—are dealt with too; the whole working of the machine lies revealed,

Then with the competition for the Dome, Brunelleschi comes on the scene. At first he is in subjection to the *magistri* of the guild; but there is considerable friction between them. Brunelleschi gets the support of the civic authority (who are finding the money for the enterprise), and in 1434, after a stormy meeting, gets liberty of action granted to him, and defeats the leaders of the old organization, which after this time slowly disintegrates, till, under Lorenzo de Medici, it is definitely superseded by the school of art which he founded. Thus the system whereby individual architects direct the erection of buildings for wealthy connoisseurs supersedes the old co-operative effort. At the same time the old constitution of Florence, based on the representation of the seven greater and fourteen lesser *arti*, is slowly sapped, as the Medici from the beginning of the fifteenth century onwards gradually absorb to themselves power, gradually transform popular government into parasitic dependence.

We now know the names of architects, and the buildings they design are called theirs—the actual executants are their instruments. Magnificent results are obtained, nowhere greater than at Florence, where the Strozzi and Riccardi palaces, with their strength, their

restraint, their admirable simplicity (every line tells, the ornament is grouped just where it will be most effective and nowhere else) show the Renaissance at its best. There is too a grave restful beauty about Brunelleschi's church San Spirito, which in some moods is grateful after the restlessness and insistence of more adventurous buildings. The unique position of Venice, where "the sea's the street," its contact with the East, its security, its opulence, are all betrayed in its gorgeous palaces, loaded with ornament. But it is impossible to go through the Italian cities, noting their distinctive architectural methods and the local peculiarities they illustrate: it would need not only wide knowledge, but a sympathetic intimacy with the builders which is difficult to recover. When one has read the autobiography of Benvenuto Cellini, one begins to realize a little what life was really like in the earlier Renaissance, "an age of adventurers, bandits, bullies, Ishmaelites and tyrants":[1] one can read a little of the story told in the architecture[2]—a visible commen-

[1] John Addington Symonds: *Renaissance in Italy.*

[2] I'm my own master, paint now as I please—
Having a friend, you see, in the Corner House!
Lord, it's fast holding by the rings in front—
Those great rings serve more purposes than just
To plant a flag in or tie up a horse.
BROWNING, *Fra Lippo Lippi.*

tary on the story of that most lovable ruffian.

In Italy the Renaissance, so far as architecture is concerned, is undoubtedly shown at its best. In its later periods it degenerates into the wedding-cake ornament style known as Rococo, and, as everywhere else, becomes tiresome and trivial. But the fifteenth century work is admirable. The churches reflect the character of the Church of the time. St. Peter's at Rome, pre-eminently in its huge scale, ostentatious richness and soulless decoration, embodies fittingly the obscuration of the spiritual aims of the Church by its material prosperity. But there is something magical about the atmosphere of Italy, where, as Vernon Lee[1] says, Nature has "a perfect mania for obvious composition and deliberate picturesqueness," and one accepts with satisfaction there work that under another sky would be merely offensive.

To turn to the rest of Europe. The Classical Revival reached them through different channels: to England especially it comes through France and Holland, and both leave their mark on the version that results.

Generally one may say that the architecture of Western Europe has gone through three stages.

[1] *Limbo.*

In the age of Gothic, it is a child, with all the intense gravity, unreflective gaiety of a child ; above all, with a child's freedom from self-consciousness.

In the early Renaissance the child is growing up ; he is acquiring learning and is proud of it. He " shows off "—and shows off so naïvely that he is still charming, and the faults of grammar he commits here and there only add to his attractiveness.

Finally (in developed Renaissance) he has crammed up his subject and is letter-perfect. He insists on his scholarship, sniffs at everything that it does not sanction, and bores you to death with wearisome iteration.

Early Renaissance architecture in the West is seen at its best in the châteaux of the Loire. There, there are rushing rivers and wooded valleys, set with delightful villages built of the beautiful cream-cheese-like stone with which the country abounds. There on islands in the stream, or beside backwaters are built the châteaux, steep roofed, turreted, with deep effective cornices, gay elaborate dormers, climbing, clustering chimney stacks.

Azay is built on an island in the Indre. There we have the angle turrets of an earlier day, but instead of being carried down to the base, they are made a pretext for the elaborate

corbellings that the French love, and so are gathered into the angle. They have the *chemin de ronde,* also, but it is broken into by the fantastically effective dormers. In the details of the ornament too there are little classical consoles, the shell ornament, mouldings with classical profiles, pediments, all small in scale, delicately wrought, at once abundant and refined. They are worked in with semi-Gothic niches and little slender Gothic shafts; the whole effect, nevertheless, is not incongruous. The châteaux must be seen for their charm to be understood. Lionnieres, Azay's neighbour, is on a shallow island which is like a lawn floating on the river; the water laps over its edge, and, but for the low plank bridge that ties it to the bank, you might imagine château, island and all moving off and away down stream. Chenonceaux, built out across its river, Chambord with its riot of fancy in cupolas, dormers and chimney-stacks, Blois with its staircase, all speak of their age—the age of Francois Ier, the impulsive, extravagant, shallow, successful figurehead of the French Renaissance.

At Blois you may see summarized the weakest points of the early, the strongest points of the later Renaissance. There on the façade of the Francois Ier wing, you have a medley

of Gothic and Classic features, elaborate, fretful, charming too, but restless, incoherent. The openings are spaced irregularly, as in a Gothic building, and they are of different sizes, but between them are classical pilasters and the profiles of the mouldings are classical. Gothic gargoyles spout from under the balustrade of the gallery, Gothic crockets run up the roof beside the balustered chimney-stacks. Raised up on its rocky plateau, it is startlingly effective, with its deep window recesses richly coloured and gilded inside, and the dark shadow under the roof of its topmost gallery.

Right up against it, however, is the solid mass of the Gaston d'Orleans wing. It is simple, there is nothing to break the great expanse of the roof ; the whole scheme below is just an arrangement of one simple motive, coupled columns with windows between, superimposed Classical orders. Raised on a great plinth it is splendidly massive ; there is nothing cheap or pretentious about it. The old free fanciful ornament is impracticable—its authors are dead : a wise economy of ornament therefore characterizes the work. It is sober, simple, confident, at rest, and the contrast with its emotional neighbour is striking. We cannot follow the progress of French Renais-

sance architecture through the frivolities of the Louis Fifteenth period, with its decoration of scrolls and ribbons, amorini and cartouches, claws, pots and chains down to modern French work. It may be said generally that through all its eccentricities there is a grace which is characteristic of its authors—it is never as gross as the German work or as dull as English. So through all the disasters and degradation of recent French history, France has always retained a certain spirit, invincible, irresistible, which preserves for it an abiding influence in the European family.

To return to England. Every one recognizes the charm of our irregular, hospitable, "romantic" Elizabethan and Jacobean mansions—Kirby, Hardwick, Hatfield, Audley End and a score of others. Retaining Gothic features like the oriel, gable and mullioned window, they worked in all sorts of Classic details, translating them, as it were, from Italian into English. The great panelled hall survives from Gothic times with its gallery, dais, lofty window and elaborate fireplace. The broad staircase and the long gallery lent themselves to that taste for scenic effect which characterized the age. The gardens surrounding them contribute very largely to their charm and dignity.

The new toy was played with enthusiastically, and the results are undeniably delightful—a unique, priceless possession to be guarded with the most unsleeping vigilance, always bearing in mind, however, that it is but a toy after all. All over the country, too, one finds lesser country houses perhaps even more intimately charming, all expressing the same set of builders, survivors of the Gothic age, retaining their deftness, still held by their tradition, but playing happily with the new style that had been lent to them, since they could no longer invent for themselves.

But after the close of the seventeenth century architecture in England settles down into intolerable cold weariness in the great houses—typical of the ruling class in that pompous century—and only remains human in the lesser ones.

But before it reaches that point, there bubbles up the work of a unique genius, Sir Christopher Wren (1632–1723). A mathematician, scientist and astronomer, he moulded the style he employed to the necessities of structure and function, not vice versa. With an active imagination and a most nimble intelligence, nothing came amiss to him, and his simplest and humblest buildings (like the Choir school at Salisbury, for instance) are as

admirable as his great cathedral. In each the problem to be solved is seen clearly and solved sincerely.

Nowhere better than in London can we recognize his astonishing fertility in invention and his illuminating common sense. His steeples—Bow Church, for instance—are marvels of grace and strength and will always redeem London from insignificance, whatever waves of dullness and pretentiousness surge round their bases. They would seem so easy to do, had not his successors left their attempts to show how easy it is to fail also. His City churches are triumphs of ingenuity and resource: an awkward site was not a handicap to Wren, but an opportunity. Without doing violence to Classic character, he made the Classic features dance to his tune and to no one else's. One wishes that there were space to treat in detail some of his buildings—St. Paul's, the Sheldonian at Oxford, Hampton Court—but we are concerned here with tracing general movements, not appreciating particular architects. Wren showed that genius will spring to success, whatever the handicaps upon it, whatever materials it has to use.

But Wren was unique. After his time (and during his lifetime) architecture in England settled down to pompous ostentation or

complacent dullness, at least in its greater buildings.

It is the age of the patron. Buildings are raised for great lords whose aim is dignity, whose standard of criticism is correctness. Everything is referred to Vitruvius and his rules. To conform to the Classic canons rooms must be huge and inconvenient; to fit into a symmetrical plan the kitchen will be placed half a mile from the dining-room which it is to serve; features that cannot be justified by the text-book—such as chimneys and dormer windows—must be hidden away behind pediment and parapet. Great stone buildings like Castle Howard, Kedleston and Blenheim give exactly the character of the deplorably artificial people for whom they were built. They are symmetrical, balanced, wearisomely lengthy, irritatingly insincere—just like the dedications that invariably occur on the title pages of books of the period, with their "not only's" balanced by "but also's," with their stock epithets and their inevitable tags—all just the same, and varying only in the arrangement of the materials.

Architecture now ceases altogether to be the product of free co-operation, it is the work of slaves carrying out the orders of an autocrat. Invention dies out; admittedly all that

is sought to be expressed in the building is scholarship. We are witnessing the gradual degradation of the worker that culminated in the industrial revolution at the end of the eighteenth century. All that is left is a body of workers, without freedom to invent, working for an upper class without the will to do so or the capacity.

It is hardly necessary to dwell in detail on the economic changes that took place through the eighteenth century. The guilds, which were proving but an encumbrance, were rightly swept away, but nothing took their place. The worker, unorganized, was at the mercy of the capitalist, who now began to discover his function and exercise it. The extension of markets, the discovery and utilization of Power, the mechanical inventions, all told against the individual and made mass production (entailing the possession of capital) inevitable. The factory system was developed; concentration in great towns was a consequence.

The landed class, who got into power in the eighteenth century, used that power to enclose ever more and more of the public land; to entrench themselves ever more securely, and leave the mass of the people less and less secure. The towns, which had hitherto recorded so accurately and intelligibly the story of their

successive inhabitants, are now overwhelmed, swamped, buried under the press of new buildings — factories and dwellings built not as formerly, primarily for use, but for profit, and expressing, dolefully enough, their motive.

The town that used to be an illuminated text is now a palimpsest; only here and there some favoured ones escape, here and there in the swamped towns ancient houses half-submerged poke up their heads.

The industrial revolution, like all revolutions, was destructive, but again, like most revolutions, its products were short-lived. When the tide recedes and decentralization sets in (and it is setting in) there will be a fair quantity still of pre-jerry work standing firm amid the ruins of its invaders.

The eighteenth century, then, was an age of pomposity in its earlier years, annihilation in its later. But we have by no means covered all the ground in that sweeping generalization. Besides the great houses of stone, there were the lesser houses of brick. Besides the nobility and gentry there were the tradesmen, professional men and parsons—and it is they who through that century maintained the character of the nation, and it is their dwellings that redeem it from sheer dullness and stupidity. For they are admirable; there are one or two

examples of the town house in nearly every town, built of beautiful mellow golden-red brick or sombre red-brown, with a well-proportioned entrance door (green) in the middle of its face, with wooden architraves and hood painted white and delicately beaded and moulded. They have heavy sash windows, often a flagged path between the house door and the wrought-iron gate, and there is a trim lawn and a cedar and shrubberies. Inside there is a wide and shallow staircase with charmingly moulded balusters, and there are great deep cupboards with little windows to them, and fireplaces adorned with dignity and elaboration, and a profusion of small classical motives skilfully wrought. The floors are dark and polished, the woodwork never sticks or warps and scarcely decays. They are solid and convenient, and express that security and comfort that characterized the middle class of the period. Rye, Salisbury, Abingdon are full of them; at Petersham there are splendid examples. They are doctors' houses, solicitors' houses, rectories and the town houses of greater people, who were yet not great enough to need pomp. They come into the background of many novelists of the early nineteenth century. Lady Catherine de Bourgh's mansion of Rosings was evidently such a great house as we

have described, Mr. Bennet's such a small one. You see them, thanks to Mrs. Gaskell's genius, in the little town that is the setting for *Wives and Daughters*, and in *Cranford* (and it is characteristic that the personages in those books have no concern for the great events that are stamped on their time by the history books. The Napoleonic war, the Industrial Revolution pass over their heads, bent as they are over the affairs of the parish, or at most the county).

Houses such as these, too, are implied in George Eliot's *Silas Marner*; Dickens has admirable drawings of them (but generally rather dusty and decaying) in *Bleak House*, *Great Expectations* and *Little Dorrit*. With Thackeray we reach the period of plaster; the background of all his work is the yellow-plastered monotony of Brighton or Mayfair, with the falseness of the plaster fully explained and the shoddiness of the brickwork behind it.

The country houses—as opposed to the town houses—of this class are rambling and lovable, and many of them are histories in miniature—for many, like Harthover in *The Water Babies*, " had been built at ninety different times and in nineteen different styles, and looked as if somebody had built a whole street of houses of every imaginable shape and then

stirred them together with a spoon . . . so that Harthover House was a great puzzle to antiquarians, and a thorough Naboth's vineyard to critics and architects and all persons who like meddling with other men's business and other men's money."

When judgment is passed on the eighteenth century it will be through these houses and their inhabitants that it will escape condemnation, and it is no unimportant witness to our ineffectiveness and disorder to-day that their rather unenterprising virtues of sagacity and unobtrusive dignity seem the best that we can hope to attain to, and are exalted from satisfactory commonplaces to unapproachable ideals.

But in the eighteenth century men worshipped Order and Dignity and Security and Boswell's "Great Principle of Subordination": the faith that dared everything and the community that made possible anything had gone. Humanity was marking time.

TO-DAY: CHAOS

We are not near enough to love,
I can but pity all your woe;
For wealth has lifted me above,
And falsehood set you down below.

If you were true, we still might be
Brothers in something more than name;
And were I poor, your love to me
Would make our differing bonds the same.

But golden gates between us stretch,
Truth opens her forbidding eyes;
You can't forget that I am rich,
Nor I that you are telling lies.

Love never comes but at Love's call,
And pity asks for him in vain;
Because I cannot give you all
You give me nothing back again.

And you are right with all your wrong,
For less than all is nothing too;
May heaven beggar me ere long
And Truth reveal herself to you.

MARY E. COLERIDGE,
An Insincere Wish addressed to a Beggar.

CHAPTER VII

TO-DAY: CHAOS

MEN in the past showed in their buildings the character of the civilization to which they had attained: they do so quite as clearly to-day. The distinctive feature of modern civilization is the emphasis that it lays on Production, and above all Production for Profit. As in the past in any view of the town the cathedral dominated it and expressed the prevailing influence of religion, so to-day the sky-scraper dominates the new town and proclaims the supremacy of industry (compare Amiens or Beauvais with New York or Chicago). In an industrial town the dwellings of the workers who support and vitalize the huge factories lie round about these factories, just as the old houses clustered round the churches which their owners had raised and beautified and in which they worshipped. In many towns the change from the one character to the other may be discerned actually taking place (e.g. Rouen, an old town becoming modernized), in many the process has been completed (Man-

chester), in some few it has never begun. For instance one fancies that, on the one hand, Trinity Church in New York never dominated the city; on the other, nothing at Beauvais has ever disputed the supremacy of the Cathedral.

Had this change of emphasis been all, architecture would have been no less interesting, if less beautiful, to-day than in the past. But it is not only man's aim that has changed, but his method of pursuing it. The most paralysing circumstance about modern buildings is the absence of sincerity—they are not trying to express their real purpose, but to conceal it. The aim the builders seek to achieve does not harmonize with the effect they seek to create: the one is profit, the other dignity, astonishment, profusion, ease—anything but that. It is scarcely too much to say that the effect that it is sought to produce in modern commercial buildings is Advertisement, in domestic buildings Ostentation. In all the dominant motive in the actual builder's mind (not the only motive) was the profit that would be realized on the transaction. Whatever features are adopted, whatever ornament employed, it must justify itself as a paying investment, directly or indirectly. Dickens' analysis of the various parts of the equipment of the Anglo-Bengalee

Disinterested, etc., Office in *Martin Chuzzlewit* (from the office chairs to the red waistcoat of the porter at the door) is a masterly exposition of the whole theory of the architecture of offices. How really impressive this architecture may be can be seen magnificently in John Belcher's great block of offices, " Electra House," in Finsbury Pavement. Tremendous, efficient, intricate, balanced, power without pomp, dignity without swagger, they are " the City " at its best, and challenge comparison with the buildings of those other mighty merchants three hundred years ago over the sea at Venice. But they are thoroughly commercialized : they have a value to their occupiers over and above their use as shelter and security, but it is a commercial value. But if in the great offices you have pose at its best, in the shops you have it degraded to gesticulation. We walk in our cities between ranks of advertisements in brick and stone, each shouting, beckoning, and after dark winking at us in desperate attempts to outdo its fellows in attracting attention. Holborn is perhaps the most conspicuous example, and the long vista of Oxford Street, but any suburb shows the same effect, where the advent of a branch of a multiple shop has set all the small competitors rebuilding, refacing, bulging and spiking in efforts to counteract

the destructive allurement of its flamboyant novelty.

Not to labour the point too much, the purpose of the shop is not primarily housing or warehousing, just as the purpose of the newspaper is not primarily the giving of news: in each case it is Advertisement.

Now in pre-capitalist times men's buildings taught indeed and insisted and beckoned, but not to proclaim men's own proficiencies; and their theme was prophecy, not profits. It is the difference between the preacher and the cheap-jack—the theme is everything, the test sincerity.

In domestic architecture the same character is apparent, but in a less pronounced degree. In suburban dwellings snobbery is the principal motive. There are rows and rows of villas at £60 trying to look like their betters at £80—not unsuccessfully till you see their backs from the railway. In each there is a front room with walnut suite of furniture, photogravures after Maud Goodman, Elsley, Blair Leighton. Not only the outsides are identical, the insides are similar—in none is there any aim apparent but that of making the best possible show, an exhibition of "substitutes" scarcely distinguishable (it is hoped) from the real article. In all the best room by far is the kitchen. There

utility is the guiding motive—making a show is of less importance than making a pudding. Things there are made to be used, furniture, utensils, fittings have been chosen because they were useful, and as a result the impression that is made is an impression of satisfaction, of interest and comfort—here is action, not acting. Scarcely anywhere else in the house do the needs and preferences of the inhabitants come out: the little houses are expressionless. But it would be a grave error to suppose that because these little pats of brick do not express the personality of their occupier, there is no personality to express. Every dweller all down the street has his unique point of view, his pet projects, his ideas of himself and of his neighbours—grotesque, fantastic, appealing, at any rate supremely interesting; but he cannot express them through his surroundings.

The actual management of a house, even a small one, is an employment requiring the nicest skill and a long apprenticeship: the woman who follows it could stamp on the house she inhabits her proficiency in it, her ideas about it; but the man who buys the house is not the person who lives in it—he sleeps there, indeed, but most of his active life is spent elsewhere. The person who designs the house does not have

to work it—he is a man, and house management is almost universally left to women. The contractor who erects the house is similarly a layman, essentially a salesman rather than an artist ; finally, the workman who actually puts brick on brick sees his work in terms of hours and rates rather than fitness and invention. There is no effective demand—the consumer doesn't know what he wants, or how to make himself understood if he did. The producer is not concerned with meeting possible wants, but with making practical profits. Both sides think in appearances, not things ; they are in the land of bogeys.

Only in the better sort of domestic buildings, small country houses, for instance, do you find a more satisfactory state of things. There, if the owner is ignorant of the kitchen, he knows what he wants in the smoking-room ; his wife may leave the actual work of the house to the servants, but she knows what she wants in the garden and its buildings, and even, perhaps, in the nursery. The architect, too, is dealing not (as in the cottage or villa) with the minimum requirements of living (about which he knows nothing), but with the embroideries and trimmings of life (about which he knows a little), and hence there is the beginning of an effective demand met by an appropriate supply—a

gleam of sympathy between producer and consumer. Many country houses to-day, therefore, give a pleasant effect of convenience and adequacy, and if any of the buildings of this age are to survive to tell future generations about us, we should wish that they might do so.

Generally speaking, however, our buildings to-day reflect the character of our industry, production for profit, not for use, workers producing what they will not use themselves for an unwilling public that takes what it doesn't want because it doesn't know what it does want.

Only in the efforts of men thrown back into contact with practical necessities to meet which the industrial system provides no readymade expedients, do we find originality breaking out and progress taking place. The smallholder who invents new chicken houses and storage sheds is the pioneer of civilization!

It is in Church Architecture, perhaps, that the defects of the capitalistic society of to-day are most clearly discerned, just as in great engineering triumphs we see its advantages.

We have seen what were the social conditions that produced the great churches of the past and the motives that animated their producers. The Gothic Revival—an altogether welcome revolt against the architec-

tural conventions of the day — attempted to re-create mediaeval forms without first re-creating the spirit which alone made them realizable. The result was an impression of insincerity that made the buildings a hindrance rather than a help to worship—they seemed to petrify into permanence the inconsistencies of the congregation that separated so sharply its Sunday professions from its week-day practice.

All around men were making discoveries, and the engineer with his remorseless economy, his accurate calculations, was raising structures—bridges, factories, derricks, steamships—that were scientific and sincere and embodied in concrete form the new revelations that had come to the Earth. But the churches were raised in a style of the past that had no affinities with the changed conditions, the changing outlook of the present. The oppressing problems that each discovery entailed, the experiments that were being worked out with so much stress and anxiety around, found no expression through the church builders, resolutely bending their scrutiny on an irrecoverable past.

"They have taken with them to the grave," wrote Ruskin of the Mediaeval builders, "their powers, their honours, and their errors; but they have left us their adoration." It was not

adoration that built the churches of the nineteenth century. The revelation struggling to become articulate does not find its interpretation through the Church, which is not now the herald of revolution, but the butler to the Sunday dinner.

Church going and church building are less acts of worship than evidences of success, guarantees of propriety, or if there is worship it is worship of custom. The industrial revolution has put its stamp on everything—ugliness here, energy there, patience, daring, greed elsewhere: on the Church it has stamped insincerity.

But those who initiated the movement that is called the Gothic Revival were sincere enough. It is a hard lesson for the architect to learn that if he is to recover beauty he must turn his face from it; that those who are creating it are not students of art, but students of sociology; that it follows the achievement of social righteousness and follows nothing else; that if he runs a Boys' Club in the evening, or fags at local government, or even shouts at street corner meetings, he is doing more to advance his calling than all he attains in his hours at the drawing-board; finally, that if he serves the Labour movement, he is effecting more than if he employs any

number of labourers. For one of the essential conditions of beauty in architecture is Freedom, and until the worker is free the very best work that is done must be second best.

Ruskin came to realize this; Morris realized it and turned from the handiwork he loved to the agitation and organization he hated, to the stupidity of crowds, the irritability of revolutionaries, all the inevitable meannesses that make the best causes hard to stick to, and that test their adherents more than the most ferocious persecution.

The lives of the great Victorian architects—Scott, Street, Pearson—are inspiring examples of lofty aims followed with toil and devotion, but they were making bricks without straw, and while their idealism is welcome there is an unreality about their best work—it is inevitably insincere. We are in the land of illusion—it is bogey architecture. These are not men of the nineteenth century speaking to us through their buildings, they are as unreal as their contemporary, the "economic man" of the economists.

Gothic is a style that demands a homogeneous society for its production. Its buildings are finely wrought throughout; there is no distinguishing the structure from its ornament, they are one; the same hands wrought both.

But in the nineteenth century society was not so constituted.[1] There was a great gulf between skilled and unskilled, rich and poor, artist and workman.

Towards the end of the century the genius of Bentley recognized the appropriateness of the Byzantine method to such conditions, and in Westminster cathedral you have clearly defined to-day the carcase—a great impressive mass of brick and concrete—raised by the labourer, bricklayer, excavator, concretor by monotonous toil in material that is common and cheap, and the decoration of that carcase, glittering mosaic and patterned marbles, the

[1] Ruskin, *The Stones of Venice*, vol. ii., ch. 6, par. 1. . . . the foundations of society were never yet shaken as they are at this day. It is not that men are ill fed, but that they have no pleasure in the work by which they make their bread, and therefore look to wealth as their only means of pleasure. It is not that men are pained by the scorn of the upper classes, but they cannot endure their own; for they feel that the kind of labour to which they are condemned is verily a degrading one, and makes them less than men. Never had the upper classes so much sympathy with the lower, or charity for them as they have at this day, and yet never were they so much hated by them, for of old the separation between the noble and the poor was merely a wall built by law, now it is a veritable difference in level of standing, a precipice between upper and lower grounds in the field of humanity, and there is pestilential air at the bottom of it.

fine work of the artist in material that is rare and costly.

That is the appropriate style for our industrial civilization to-day; it doesn't blink the facts. It uses the unskilled mechanical labour that produces our riches to create the only beauty in its scope, size; and it uses the riches that Labour produces to clothe the bareness of its monuments. So much beauty as that we can accomplish, and the building is a worthy expression of our civilization, as Gothic buildings are not.

To come to details. In the town we see the substitution of submergence for development taking place with accelerated rapidity. Take the South-West district of London—Putney, Wandsworth and Battersea. Thirty years ago at Putney there was the old wooden bridge across the River, the High Street of old dark bricked houses and decorous shops—notably Fairfax House, where the Protector stayed—leading up from the River to the steep slope of Putney Hill, with its square opulent houses in large shady gardens. Beyond them the Heath was still wild, and at its edge watched by great blocks of houses, comfortable, solid, smelling of plum-cake and beeswax; quiet, dignified, set in grounds that were almost small estates, with gardeners' cottages in their far-off corners among cucumber frames and

potting-sheds. All these were on the high ground; on the lowlands along the Thames and Wandle were small, squat cottages in market gardens, and towards Battersea laundries and factories with their attendant slums. Wandsworth High Street was like its neighbour, and in both towns, although the rows of villas were spreading yearly over more of their territories (mean little white-brick boxes with basements) there were still left plenty of witnesses to their former life even to three centuries back.

Now the High Streets are just double rows of modern shops, red brick with stone dressings, and they might be the High Streets of any of London's dozens of suburbs (the wooden bridge at Putney has gone—inevitably). Red brick villas have invaded every scrap of ground around them. They have a bow window on one side of the front door, and a long projection behind; there are cast-iron railings on dwarf walls in front; there are gates that clang and variegated shrubs catch bits of paper from the asphalted footpaths. They have spread for miles towards Wimbledon and even up the lower slopes of the Heath where the great houses still stand. They still stand, but they are threatened. One has been turned into flats, another has been pulled down and its

grounds developed on Garden City lines. Motor buses roar and thunder past their front gates—the days of their glory are past.

Meanwhile, while the front files of the villa army are storming the heights, the rearguard in the valley are in difficulties. The roughcast that covered such shoddy brickwork is peeling, the railings in front are broken ; along the River the foundations have settled and the door and window frames are suffering. Off Garratt Lane the villas have become slum property, and the streets are already the haunt of occupiers who are only intermittently rent-payers.

Soon closing orders and demolition orders will come along, and in another generation they will be cleared and model dwellings, blocks of flats and Board Schools will take their place.

The process goes on more and more quickly as we watch. Almost in one man's lifetime the district may change from country to residential suburb, from residences to villas, from villas to slums, from slums ro reconstruction ! The characteristics of the modern development of towns are first its destructiveness, and secondly its impermanence. We are in an age of transition, instability is the note of all our institutions, theories and beliefs,

and the buildings that reflect our age are similarly unstable.

The contrast between the present and the immediate past is shown nowhere more clearly than in the part of Wandsworth called Southfields. There on the edge of a spur projecting into the Wandle valley stand a row of square, solid houses, a fair distance apart, well back from the road, with shrubberies on front and flank, with good gardens on the slope of the hill at the back. In the gardens will be a lawn and a dark green summer-house, and a good deal of ivy and a good deal of smuts. In front there is a stout brick wall, with two gates united by a drive. They are called "The Hollies," "The Grange," and names like that. The top windows have bars—they belong to the nursery and night nursery. The staircase window has vividly coloured panes of glass in it—yellow and scarlet. The stairs are shallow (except to the basement); the fireplaces are wide. The hall has marbled paper; the curtains of the dining-room are maroon, the furniture mahogany. Everything is plain and rather solid and made to last.

Children have played in these houses and have left their mark upon them, but left them undamaged. The woodwork is painted and grained and its coats seem never to wear out.

Du Maurier drew houses like them over and over again in *Punch*. They stood for permanence, solid comfort, good investments, a secure position; stood too for that "Fireside Humanity" which Ruskin says all men expand into after the mechanical and sordid toil of business—the sunny side of Capitalism.

Round the base of that spur of high ground, backing against the ends of the gardens of those houses, surge now the new villas. They are rough-cast and half-timber work in front, and have leaded panes to the windows and an ornamental ridge to the roof. A granolithic path leads up to the front door from the cast-iron gate. There is carving on the capitals that carry the porch. At the back they are plain stock brickwork and the projecting wing stifles the back rooms. Its windows stare at the blank back of its neighbour a few feet away, and a narrow strip of garden ends at the railway embankment. There are thousands of them, all just alike; they are cheap and convenient, above all transitory. No one takes them for life; no one means to live more than a year or two in them, till their freshness has worn off and the bones begin to show through. They are not built for large families, and when the family grows the tenant must leave the spot, for that type of house cannot be

enlarged and they are all of that type. If things go well, they move further up or further out to semi-detached villas and then to detached residences. Others take their place, to move on in their turn. New Southfields is a camp, not a town; its inhabitants come and go, its dwellings spring up like tents, and like them will soon disappear. But the Victorian houses are more solid; they are turned into flats in the suburbs and start life afresh with a second front door and an altered face, conscious of the indigestion within. In the inner ring they become laundries and small factories and institutes, and stand pathetically betraying their domestic origin through their industrial trappings, like farmhorses commandeered to drag munition wagons in the war.

The same note of impermanence characterizes the offices and factories of to-day. What is the life of a steel-framed or re-inforced concrete building? We do not know yet, but it is possible that if they achieve permanence it will be at the cost of unceasing vigilance. Again, processes change rapidly, needs alter, or a new invention revolutionizes methods, and the building must adapt itself to the change or go. So we see in great cities modern buildings still fresh and new pulled down to make room for a successor planned on more

modern lines (for instance, the disappearance of the Walsingham House to make room for the Ritz Hotel). For this reason great buildings are now planned almost as shells, with an empty interior that can be split up with partitions and re-split up, as required. It may be questioned whether, in view of the probable shifting of population outwards, made possible by the growth of rapid and cheap transport, it was not an error to build Board Schools and Model Dwellings so solidly; they may be left high and dry, like rocks from which the tide of population has receded, while their rigid inadaptability to new theories of education or new appliances for housekeeping may handicap them in competing with more pliable structures.

They may stand, after the ephemeral cottages and villas around them have passed away, looking across from their lowlands at those other solidities of the Victorian period; they will be landmarks—at these levels dwelt the poor, at those the well-to-do, at those the rich.

They may stand, too, as symbols of the spirit of their age. The square, heavy residences of the earlier period—self-satisfied, scarcely yet disturbed by questionings as to what underlies and supports their solid comfort;

the schools, later evidence of a community's uneasiness, and earnest of progress towards a solution of its problems; the blocks of model dwellings, first fruits of a conscience awakened, of willingness to clear off the accumulated errors of the past, to replace the bad with something better—fumbling at present, hacking away at results, leaving causes untouched, making mistakes enough, but yet awake, struggling, experimenting.

To turn to church building in detail. As in the church services metaphors are used, symbolism is appealed to which awakes no response in the minds of the people of to-day, so in the church building its fittings will be sprinkled with monograms which few can decipher and fewer still understand if they could; the plaster will be dotted with symbolical forms utterly meaningless except to an antiquarian.

So, too, in the windows are figures that never were and never could be, preposterously mild, irritatingly reproving, rapturously imbecile. Just as those stained-glass saints are *sui generis*, so the Bible is a book apart, that never means what it says as other books do (for instance *The Wealth of Nations*). The tremendous phrases of the Church services are innocuous from much repetition and little emphasis. The Church doesn't voice the

people, the church building doesn't express the builders.

There is a fatal unreality about it all. "We Anglicans," said an Anglican priest, "are always ready to attack any evil except the one that is pressing at the moment." There is the matter in a nutshell. There are great exceptions. Kingsley and Maurice, the Guild of St. Matthew, the Christian Social Union struggled to bridge the gulf, to bring the Church into contact with the problems which it alone can solve, to drag St. George up to the Dragon. So too architecturally. Norman Shaw built a really modern church at Bedford Park; Sedding in Holy Trinity Church, Sloane Street, cut the Gothic cloth so that it nearly fitted the modern form. But all through the century churches are either Classic temples (like St. Pancras Church), or Italian Churches (as at Wilton), or Early English, Decorated or Perpendicular, everywhere. Only in the Friends' Meeting House is there a stark sincerity of worship, housed in a building whose honesty is more than plain.

To take Domestic Architecture in detail. The early and mid-Victorian houses such as may be found in dozens of London squares, with their deep basements, their gaze turned resolutely inwards towards the private square

garden and their neighbours across it, may stand for that spirit which appreciated the material prosperity of the country, but turned its back upon or banished underground those who ministered to it. The snobbery of the suburban villa, aping its superiors, stands for another aspect of the time. The frivolous rusticity of a later type for a generation that is tired of complexity and of ostentation, uneasy about its position, but incapable of attaining more than a caricature of simplicity. The villa development of the suburbs, the multiplication of small houses, the invasion of select neighbourhoods all betray the breaking down of old barriers, the anarchy that precedes a new order.

The really lasting products of the age and those that express its essence are the great engineering works, like Brunel's Great Western Railway; Waterloo Bridge; docks like those at Southampton; harbours like Dover. They embody strikingly the tremendous material advances that have been made, they illustrate the power that lies in organized effort, in mass production. Their character is size and strength, appropriate to associated labour; if they have not the magic that waits on co-operation, they have the qualities of suitability, adequacy which are no small part of Beauty. If the great factories of the North, of Wigan

and Warrington, knee-deep in a hell of their own making, show the seamy side of Capitalism, the lighthouses standing miraculously in the buffeting seas, the harbours, daringly capturing and fencing tracts of open ocean, show another side—man, feeble by himself, wrestling with Nature and winning because he brings not the strength of one, but of millions to bear upon her.

Unlike the architect, the engineer is trained in the shops; he knows his material through and through, he can experiment on it and it can reveal its possibilities to his sympathetic scrutiny. Unlike the architect, who is tempted continually to make his mansion look like a castle, his villa like a châlet (and fails continually), the engineer has necessity for his mistress, and she demands sincerity and gets it. Much of his work is carried out in material, steel especially, of doubtful permanence, fed constantly on paint-pots and wholly dependent on the thoroughness of the painter, but enough will remain to testify to the real achievement of the century, the real object of its faith—material progress.

Everything else is transitory. Public buildings, for instance, in other ages the most permanent and revealing monuments of a people, are in this age incoherent, ambiguous (contrast the Government Offices in Whitehall with

the Palazzo Vecchio at Florence, the square of Guildhalls at Brussels).

They reflect the incomprehensibility of a system in the melting-pot. There are, of course, striking exceptions—no system is ever rounded and complete, no generalizations are more than approximately true. Street's church at Holmbury St. Mary in Surrey, the Victoria Tower of the Houses of Parliament, Butterfield's St. Alban's, Holborn, have a beauty that defies criticism. There are country houses in Surrey and town houses in Chelsea that show the clean side of civilization, that have charm and comfort, and convince one that all is well and one should be contented. Just so there sometimes comes a day—two or three times a year—when the air after rain is crystal clear and the sun brilliant, and everything sparkling, shining and washed, and as you look at London from one of the bridges you feel convinced that it is the most beautiful city in the world—till next day.

But these are the rare smiles in a worried face. The century and its products are anxious, bewildered, full of chaotic hope and half-realized apprehension. Towards the end its searching of heart issues in definite constructive enterprises, with which we shall have to deal in the next and final chapter.

THE FUTURE: REVOLUTION

What do we make of our idea of others in our constant attempt to justify ourselves? No Japanese bogie-monger ever produced the equal of certain wooden monster-puppets which we carve, paint, rig out and christen by the names of real folk—alas, alas, dear names sometimes of friends!—and stick up to gibber in our memory; while the real image, the creature we have really known, is carted off to Limbo!

VERNON LEE, *Limbo.*

. . . Oh
It makes me mad to see what man shall do
And we in our graves! This world's no blot for us
Nor blank; it means intensely and means good.

BROWNING, *Fra Lippo Lippi.*

CHAPTER VIII

THE FUTURE: REVOLUTION

WHAT is the outlook for the future? We are members of a community whose units are closely associated and interdependent, but are divided sharply into mutually exclusive classes; a community which devotes itself with ardour to production, but is little able to determine what and how it shall produce, a community in which industrial slavery and political freedom exist paradoxically side by side, which possesses all the elements which contribute to the formation of a coherent society without apparently the essential force that can bring them together.

We have just emerged from a war which has smashed, it seems, to fragments the structure of internationalism which was slowly coming into being in Europe. A war, too, which has knocked the bottom out of the faith of men—not indeed in Christianity, but in a Church which everywhere has surrendered to the State, has degraded itself to the position of claques, applauding each its own actor in the five years'

tragedy, which has not dared to denounce injustice, except among foreigners, which has submitted to the nationalists to-day as it submitted to the economists a century earlier.

Everywhere the hard-won standards of living and workmanship of the workers are threatened by the appalling material losses entailed by the war; and all-powerful bureaucrats promise a generation of hard times, speeding up and sweating as a preparation for the next. The three ties that bound men together in sympathy in the Middle Ages are broken; the International bond has gone, Industrial freedom is down, the Church is a machine without motive power, a shell without an egg.

We are lost in the land of bogeys: mankind has from its infancy always been good at manufacturing them, and the industry is not the least among those that were stimulated to frenzy by the war. When it broke out, Historians in the Universities hurredly redistributed the parts among their puppets to suit the new drama, and Fleet Street became a sort of nightmare bazaar with the toys turned to devils and journalists as salesmen. The fiercer the struggle, the more necessary was it to make the bogeys big and black—look back on the cartoons of Englishmen by Germans, of Germans by Englishmen; read what

Englishmen wrote of Frenchmen, Frenchmen of Englishmen a century earlier; or what Dickens wrote about Russians in the Crimean War; read what Chesterton writes about Germany to-day, and realize that he means to be serious. Remember the desperate efforts of governments to prevent their nationals meeting, lest they should see each other as they are, and realize how wars are made and maintained.

And wars not only between nations but between classes. Could anything be falser to worker and capitalist alike than their representatives in the present cartoons of *Punch* or the past cartoons of the old *Herald*? How can we get out of this battle of bogeys into the light and the fellowship of men? Where can we find any hope? Only in the knowledge that God is Love. We all know it; we are certain that Love, as revealed in the life and teaching of Jesus Christ, is illumination and strength and the knowledge of God. But we dare not say it, it sounds so much like cant. How can we dare to claim that Love should rule the policies of empires when we ourselves fail every moment of the day to walk in its light in the most trivial domestic affairs? Breakfast late when you are punctual, or vice versa, and your smiling angels turn to malicious little goblins. Race for a train with a heavy

bag, and your fellows stand in ranks of obstructive stupidity, who yesterday were the cheeriest fellow-actors on your humorous stage. Your own personal inconvenience, disappointment, comes in like harlequin and works a transformation scene before you know it.

"Real Love," says Halliday, "is a personal identification of yourself with another." Every now and then we capture it for a moment; then we get between our friend and the light and are offended that he is so gloomy. We expostulate with him, or forgive him, and we don't see that it is our own shadow that makes him so black. It is the shadow of our own selfishness, personal and national, that makes the gloom that we shudder at to-day. Turn the light upon those figures and the fiends become friends. It is the damning defect of the state of competition and suspicion in which we live, that it divides man from man, it hides man from man, it destroys community.

But do we still tolerate that state? It was true to say so not long ago. When Matthew Arnold wrote his stanzas "To Marguerite,"[1]

[1] Yes: in the sea of Life enisled,
With echoing straits between us thrown.
Dotting the shoreless watery wild
We mortal millions live *alone*.
The islands feel the enclasping flow,
And then their endless bounds they know. . . .

he was making articulate the resignation of his age, the age of the loneliness of men severed irrevocably from men. But we have passed that stage. We have lost the Victorian self-satisfaction (and the price of satisfaction is blackening your neighbour to make yourself look white, not identifying yourself with him, but making him the whipping-boy of your self-respect). We are doubtful of our fitness to use the great words we take into our mouths. When father, tired out with advocating the cause of the weak and oppressed, smacks the baby for shouting at supper, it is a regrettable inconsistency: when he recognizes it, it is the prelude to revolution.

We see (as the Gothic builders saw in the most Christian spirit) the necessity of accepting imperfection, failure, humiliation, since the demand for perfection means the organization of slavery.

We are, in spite of all the darkness round us, facing towards the light; we are concentrating on constructive effort. We do understand that, although the realization of what love is, is far beyond our groping endeavours, yet love is not benevolence, not generosity, not pity, not good nature, not peace, but a sword. Our personal difficulties in quest of it must always be enormous, but we are getting to see

that there are artificial barriers—barriers of class, language, education, tradition, public opinion, which not only ought to be broken down, but can be broken down, and a way driven through, which will allow real intercourse between brothers in the human family within nations and between nations.

Before 1914 there were signs of the old order breaking up, a new order coming in its place. The war was the last frantic effort of the old order in all countries to stop the landslide, to build a wall of fear that should buttress the old structure for a little longer. Now the landslide is moving again.

What evidence have we that this is so? It is beyond the scope of this book to try and sketch the progress of International solidarity before the war, the possibilities that lay before the revolutionary movements since the war, the common needs which are forcing the victors to assist the vanquished, which will break to pieces the wall of prohibition that our fear and hatred are raising in the vain hope of guaranteeing future security, which will prove that the interdependence of nations, the brotherhood of man, is a hard fact that even the Tiger's teeth cannot crack.

But there are one or two indications at home in our own corner of the world that may be

noted as indications of the new spirit bubbling up, and the practical constructive outcome of it. In the first place, in the controversies between the workers and the employers we find that the issue is more and more Control, less and less merely Wages. Though the occasion of the dispute may be the demand for a rise in wages, or resistance to a threatened decline, the cause is now in a great number of cases the refusal of the worker to continue working without some share in the decision of what he shall produce, some say in the determination of the conditions under which it shall be produced, and some share of responsibility for the running of the concern which organizes production.

And in the second place, the demand for control is put forward not simply because it is to the workers' interest to secure control, not simply because it is to the advantage of all concerned in the trade to increase output, enlarge profits and share the spoils, but because it is in the interest of the community as a whole. Self-control is sought, but it is self-control for service.

Thirdly, and most remarkably, the belief is gaining ground that if the industrial system is to be revolutionized, that revolution can only come about through conviction, not through coercion. To win a dispute is not enough,

you must win over your antagonist or your victory is only the prelude to reaction or reprisals. As the attention of the parties to an industry is riveted on the possibility of the development of that industry as a great public service, not only does revolution appear feasible, nay, inevitable, but sectional differences fall into a subordinate position, swamped by the larger issue which will remedy them by dissolving them.

All these forces are seen working most strikingly in the proceedings and achievements of the Industrial Council for the Building Industry (Building Trades Parliament), a new institution—it was only born in 1916—which is making revolution with a speed that is truly astonishing. Originally conceived by an employer of imagination, who combined with that rare gift unusual faith and tenacity, the idea was welcomed by the principal trade unions in the building trade (National Federation of Building Trade Operatives), who drafted a proposal for a Builders' National Industrial Parliament, which they laid before the building trade employers (National Federation of Building Trades Employers of Great Britain and Ireland), who in their turn adopted it—a brief statement which is sufficiently staggering to those familiar with the relations of em-

ployers and employees in the building trade. Without going into details of this scheme, a few extracts from its documents may be made showing the ideas that underlie it. (1.) From the Constitution of the Building Trades Parliament adopted by the whole Council on August 1, 1918. "This Council is the outcome and expression of a desire on the part of organized employers and operatives in the Building Industry to render their full share of service towards the creation of a new and better Industrial Order. By general consent the old system has proved itself unworthy and the reasons for its failure are not far to seek. From the days of the industrial revolution the relations between the employers and the employees have been based upon coercion, antagonism and resistance . . . the normal condition of the world of industry is one of suppressed war . . . the two sides rarely meet except to make demands of one another or to compromise conflicting claims, and negotiations are inevitably carried on as between two hostile bodies. In this way great powers of leadership and willing service are diverted from constructive work into the sterile fields of largely useless controversy. . . . Whilst the total elimination of such conflicts may be quite impossible, the hope of the future un-

doubtedly lies in the continuous association of Management and Labour, not for the negative purpose of adjusting differences, but for the positive purpose of promoting a progressive improvement of their industrial service, from which alone the national prosperity can be derived.

"Industrial peace must come, not as the result of the balance of power with a supreme court of appeal in the background; it must arise as the inevitable by-product of mutual confidence, real justice, constructive good will. Industry needs no truce, no compulsory arbitration, no provisions for postponement of disputes. What it needs is confidence and a courageous forward movement, supported by the constructive genius of both sides in common council. No one engaged in constructive work can fail to respond to the tremendous call of the big job, and the task to be faced to-day is the greatest problem in social engineering that the world has ever seen. It is believed that the common interests of industry will be found to be wider and more fundamental than those which are still, admittedly, opposed; and it is upon the broad basis of these common interests that the fabric of the new industrial order may be confidently raised."

Again, in the Foster Report on Organized

Public Service in the Building Industry (August, 1919), the Committee state: "We have glimpsed the possibility of the whole Building industry of Great Britain being welded together into one great self-governing democracy of organized public service, uniting a full measure of free initiative and enterprise with all the best that applied science and research can render. The whole trend of modern industrial development is already setting in this direction. We have now much valuable experience of control by the State, by the Municipality, by the Co-operative organizations of consumers, by the joint stock company, and by individual private enterprise. Most of these forms of control offer advantages, but each of them presents serious defects. We believe that the great task of our Industrial Council is to develop an entirely new system of industrial control by the members of the industry itself—the actual producers, whether by hand or by brain—and to bring them into co-operation with the State as the central representative of the community whom they are organized to serve. Nothing short of this will produce the full development of the 'team spirit' in industry, which is the key to the whole problem of production; nothing short of this is worthy of the high ideals for which our industrial council stands.

. . . Our hope for the future lies in the liberation and right direction of men's true generous qualities of goodwill, enthusiasm and adventure. They must be our constant guides, and no fear of the risks that seem to be involved must allow us to deny them." [1]

The points that will be noted in these pronouncements are the stress that is laid throughout on the idea of service—the appeal is not to individual greed, but to collective goodwill; the emphasis laid on the necessity that all engaged in the work share responsibility for it; the concentration on constructive proposals for the future instead of settling disputes of the past; finally, that they are not the expression of sectional aims, not the recommendations of an outside theorist, but the considered policy of practical men actually engaged in the industry, and absorbed in the daily toil of carrying it on. The main point about the machinery of committees and councils (exceedingly ingenious) is that immediately it was set up and it was proposed that each section, employers and employed, should choose

[1] The Foster Report is signed by all the representatives of the operatives and by three employers out of eight. The remaining five employers, "while agreeing with some of the proposals contained in the Report, do not see their way to sign it without important reservations."

its own representatives, the President of the National Federation of Building Trade Operatives " expressed the desire of his members to take part in the election of the employers' quota, and, conversely, invited the employers to vote with them in the election of the operatives' quota."

He moved that the election both of the Committees and the officers of the Council should be taken by vote of the whole house sitting together. This novel and far-reaching proposal met with immediate support, and was carried without a dissentient; and decision by vote of the whole council has become its regular practice with regard to every question that comes before it. This is perhaps the most striking feature of the Parliament; it denotes the existence of a large amount of mutual confidence and of courage to build upon that confidence. It is unique, and differentiates the Building Trades Parliament from Whitley Councils and all other schemes in which employers and employed are regarded as negotiating powers, not as co-operating workers.

With a structure growing as rapidly as this Building Trades Parliament, it would be unwise to detail its organization—the information might be out of date before this book is through

the printers' hands. It is enough to say that measures are being worked out which will have the effect of transforming employers into managers—servants of the industry as a whole; will guarantee workers against unemployment, and through their Trade Unions will give them genuine participation in the control of the industry. The Foster Report deals, among other things, with the Regularization of Demand, Decasualization of Labour, Unemployment Pay, Wages of Management, the Hiring of Capital, Scientific Management, Works Committees.

Committees are actually at work dealing with the most pressing problems before the industry; their reports will duly come before the Council, and the Council is recognized officially by the Government as the representative body for the industry.

That this development is on the lines of Guild Socialism (Socialism based on control of industries by those engaged in them for the public service, as opposed to the control of industries for the same end, but by outsiders) is clear, and one may believe that before long the complete Guildization of the industry will take place (the builders again, as in the Middle Ages, leading the way in rapid and successful development of industrial self-government).

What is its own, is its grasp of the essentials of method, and its basing itself definitely on a moral appeal, not on a supposed economic necessity.

Here is an organization which definitely sets out to plan a new industrial order and to do nothing else; which excludes settlement of disputes from its activities; which concentrates on constructive endeavour, believing that a bad idea can only be conquered by a better, and that the solvent of past differences is not compromise but a new order.

Here for the first time in industrial history really important schemes for industrial advance are being put forward without a threat by either side, and are getting discussion in an absolutely clear atmosphere. Here is that rare thing, proposals discussed *on their merits*. It should prove the swiftest instrument of revolution that has ever been seen.

Here at any rate we have the bringing about, within one industry, of that Freedom and Association which we have seen to be necessary to the creation of Beauty. What other indications of similar progress are there?

The Garden City movement, with its attempt at counteracting the segregation of classes—the East End and the West End; the attempt to create Community-consciousness; the aboli-

tion of the fences and high walls that divide the tiny plots from one another in our exclusive suburbs ; the experiments in construction and town planning—all these are useful, even if rather mannered at present and suggesting playing at Utopias.

Again, in the political field. The sweeping Labour victories in local elections, the increasing number of Labour members in the House of Commons, above all the decision of the community to avail itself of the service of women in legislation and administration—all these changes (whatever their immediate effect on our institutions) mean prodigious gains educationally. Whole sections of the population, hitherto debarred from experience in political self-government, are getting that experience, and the resulting gain to the community in coherence and understanding of its members must be very great. Akin to this is the training in industrial self-government that the rank and file are getting through the shop stewards movement.

Finally, one may just refer to the remarkable self-restraint, reasonableness and firmness displayed by the mediating Trade Union leaders in the recent Railway Strike—very encouraging both on account of the action which they took

and the action which they refrained from taking.

These facts may be regarded as pointing in one direction—the demand of the rank and file of the nation to share responsibility for all that concerns it, and the breaking down of some of the barriers of ignorance that divide its members from each other.

Only so shall we attain to Sympathy, the key to the whole matter. Only so—to return to the narrower question with which this book is concerned—shall we get a community which can express itself, and which can therefore draw out and embody beauty in its buildings. Only as we get Justice—in Plato's sense—shall we get effective demand met by effective supply, born of the mutual knowledge that illuminates both producer and consumer. Then, too, we shall get the permanence in our buildings that we deserve and our things of beauty will be joys for ever. All this may seem far enough ahead; but the present chaos does not mean barrenness—it is the ploughing for the seeds of a new harvest. In the poets of the past and the present, who can wake the universal experience and in a phrase illuminate Nature and interpret God, we can glimpse the possibility of that future sympathy, when we shall reveal, not obscure each other, and

live among men, not bogeys. And, most encouraging of all, there still stand among us those great grey cathedrals, miracles as they seem to-day, witnesses of what man has done, prophets of what he will do again; tide-marks round the shores of the world. The tide has ebbed, but already we hear the sound change, its "melancholy long withdrawing roar" dies, and instead once more "comes silent, flooding in the main."

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Only books bearing directly on the subject of the Essay, excluding general historical and other works.

Egyptian Period.

A. Choisy : L'Art de Bâtir chez les Egyptiens.
Erman : Life in Ancient Egypt.

Greek and Roman Periods.

Aristotle : Politics.
T. G. Tucker : Life in Ancient Athens.
W. Warde Fowler : City State of the Greeks and Romans.
A. Choisy : L'Art de Bâtir chez les Romains.
T. G. Tucker : Life in the Rome of Nero and S. Paul.
W. R. Lethaby : Theory of Greek Architecture (R.I.B.A. Journal, February 8, 1908).
Zimmern : The Greek Commonwealth.
Sir S. Dill : Roman Life from Nero to M. Aurelius.

Byzantine.

A. Choisy : L'Art de Bâtir chez les Byzantins.
Procopius of Caesarea : Of the Buildings of Justinian.
Lethaby and Swainson : Church of S. Sophia, Constantinople.
Texier and Pullan : Byzantine Architecture.

Mediaeval.

W. R. Lethaby : Mediaeval Art ; Westminster Abbey.
Viollet-le-Duc : Dictionnaire raisonné de l'architecture.
Leader Scott : The Cathedral Builders.
L. F. Brentano : Origin of Guilds and Trade Unions.
J. Toulmin Smith : English Guilds.
Georges Renard : Guilds in the Middle Ages.
Mrs. J. R. Green : Town Life in the Fifteenth Century.
E. S. Prior : History of Gothic Art in England.

Renaissance and Modern.

Walter Pater : Renaissance.
J. A. Symonds : Renaissance in Italy ; Life of Benvenuto Cellini (trans.).
C. W. C. Oman : Great Revolt of 1381.
J. A. Hobson : Evolution of Modern Capitalism ; Industrial System.
S. and B. Webb : History of Trade Unionism ; Industrial Democracy.
Arnold Toynbee : Industrial Revolution.
Karl Marx : Capital.

General.

J. Ruskin : Seven Lamps of Architecture ; The Stones of Venice.
C. R. Ashbee : Should we stop teaching Art ?
W. Morris : Architecture, Industry and Art ; Dream of John Ball.
R. Blomfield : Mistress Art ; Pres. Address, 1914.
A. Romney Green : Influence of Tools on Design (Arts connected with Building).
L. March Phillips : The Works of Man.
Architecture a Profession or an Art ? Thirteen Essays, ed. T. G. Jackson, R. Norman Shaw.

Printed in Great Britain by
UNWIN BROTHERS, LIMITED, THE GRESHAM PRESS, WOKING AND LONDON

THE CHRISTIAN REVOLUTION

A NEW SERIES EDITED BY
NATHANIEL MICKLEM, M.A.,

Tutor and Chaplain at Mansfield College, Oxford.

CHRISTIANITY means Revolution though not by force and blood. "These that have turned the world upside down" was first said of the followers of Christ in ancient Salonica. It must be said of them again in every land.

These are days of change and revolution, and a new age dawns. Humanity stands at the parting of the ways—for life or death. These books are written under the persuasion that only a religious solution is adequate to the world's need, and that only upon the principles for which Jesus of Nazareth stands in history can the world be fashioned to heart's desire.

For the world's problem lies in lack of fellowship. How shall man be made at one with man, class with class, nation with nation, and all men with God? It will here be contended that this problem is one, and that Jesus is the key to it. The meaning of religion lies in what Jesus was Himself, and its end is that men should be like Him. Such a Christianity is revolutionary because it involves a complete change in the standard of values whereby men live, and therefore alone has in it the power of a new heaven and a new earth wherein shall dwell righteousness and brotherhood.

This series is the work of a company of friends, who, while speaking for themselves individually, yet find themselves at one in a firm and growing conviction upon these serious matters. They send forth these books in the hope that in some small measure they may further human fellowship and true religion.

For list of volumes see overleaf.

THE CHRISTIAN REVOLUTION SERIES

Volumes already Issued—

LAY RELIGION
By HENRY T. HODGKIN, M.A., M.B., Author of "The Church's Opportunity in the present Crisis," etc. Second Edition. Crown 8vo, 3s. 6d. net.

THE EARLY CHRISTIAN ATTITUDE TO WAR
A Contribution to the History of Christian Ethics. By By C. J. CADOUX, M.A., D.D., Lecturer at Mansfield College, Oxford. With Foreword by the Rev. W. E. ORCHARD, D.D. Crown 8vo, 10s. 6d. net.

RECONCILIATION AND REALITY
By W. FEARON HALLIDAY, M.A., Winner of the "Large Gold Medal" and First Senior Moderatorship in Mental Science and Moral Science in Trinity College, Dublin. Crown 8vo, 5s. net.

THE OPEN LIGHT
An Enquiry into Faith and Reality. By NATHANIEL MICKLEM, M.A. Crown 8vo, 4s. 6d. net.

THE CHRISTIAN IDEAL
By W. E. WILSON, B.D. Crown 8vo, 5s. net.

THE WAY TO PERSONALITY
By GEORGE B. ROBSON, B.A. Third Edition. Crown 8vo, 5s. net.

THE CHRIST OF REVOLUTION
By JOHN R. COATES, B.A. Crown 8vo, 4s. 6d. net in cloth; 2s. 6d. net in paper cover.

THE REMNANT
By RUFUS M. JONES, D.Litt. Crown 8vo, 5s. net.

Other Volumes to Follow.

THE SWARTHMORE PRESS LTD.
72 OXFORD STREET, LONDON, W. 1.

UC SOUTHERN REGIONAL LIBRARY FACILITY
A 000 689 414 1